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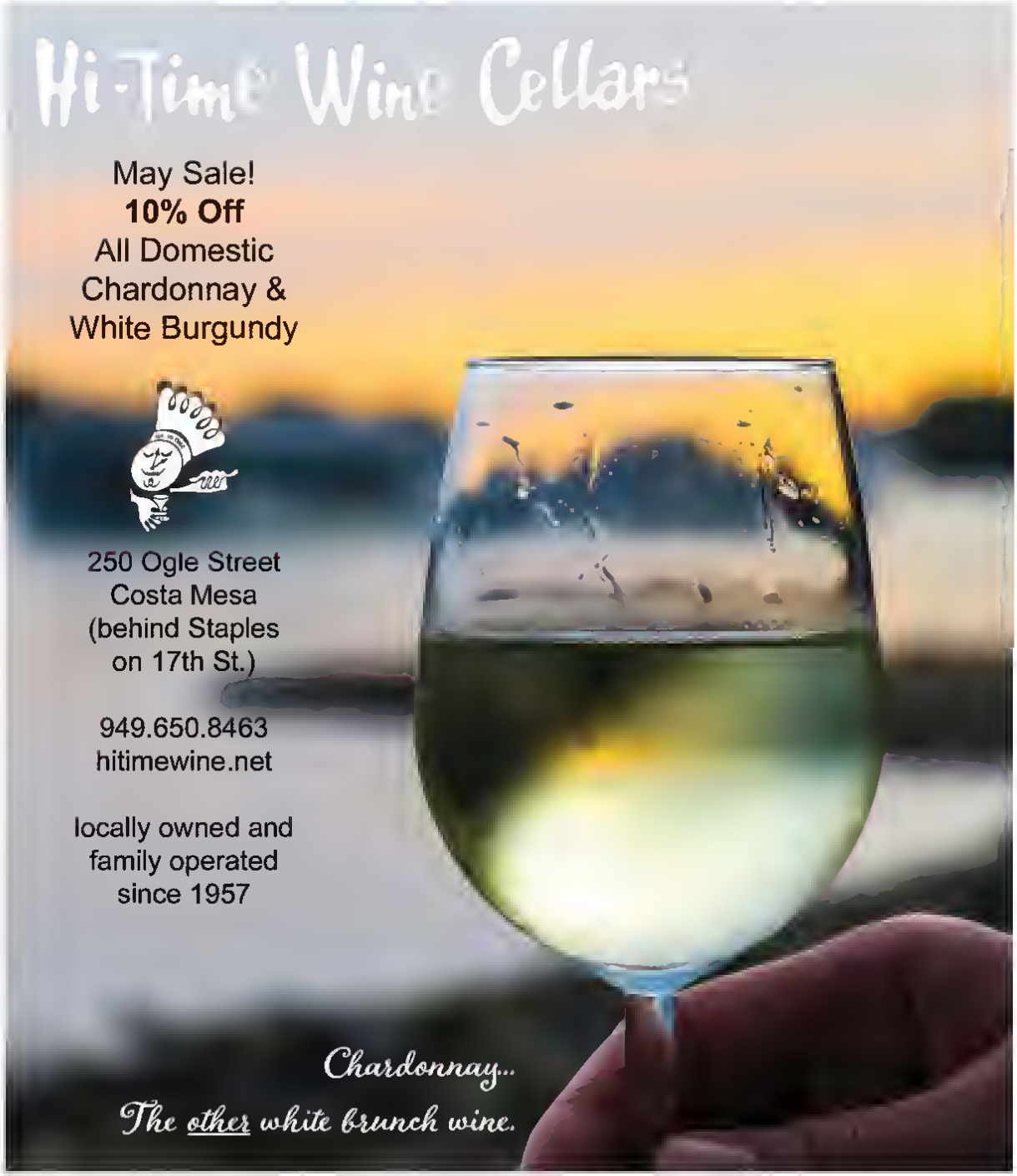

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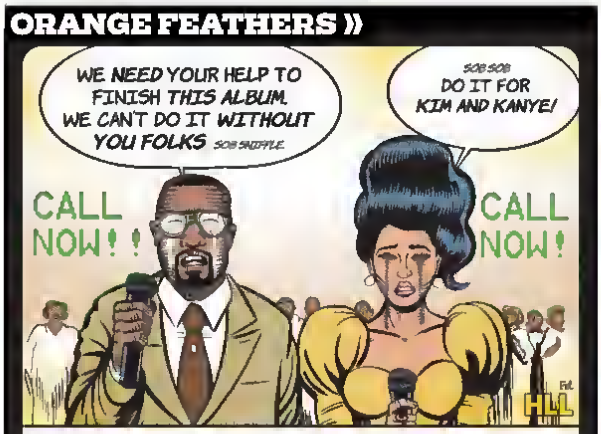
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"The OC Racist fails again!!! Points out that victims are white supremacists' but neglects to mention the race of the actual criminal who planned to kill people!!! POS Rag(zine!#!"
—Tim Sheridan, commenting on Matt Coker's "Huntington Beach Sanctuary State March was Backup Bomb Target: FBI" (April 30)

We respond: Hey fool, a few pointers. 1) There were no victims since nothing happened. 2) If the criminal planted an actual bomb both white supremacists and anti-racist demonstrators would have been victims. 3) We don't know the criminal's race and don't really care. Go back to 8chan now.

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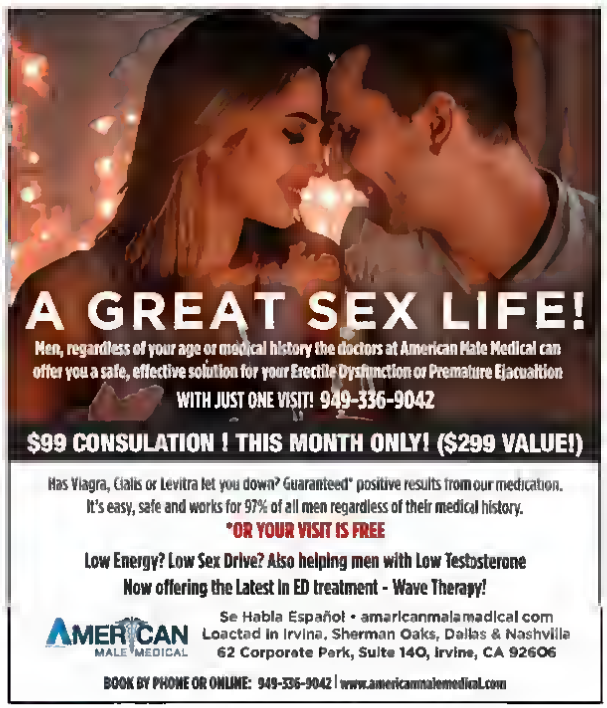
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Tick-Tock

Will new DA Todd Spitzer meet the looming deadline to prove he's the anti-Tony Rackauckas?

Attorney General Xavier Becerra called a late-April press conference in Los Angeles to celebrate a $150 million settlement with a Wall Street giant that allegedly abused state public employees on high-risk pension investments. After claiming he holds lawbreakers "accountable," Becerra stated, "The California Department of Justice is watching." The former congressional Democrat ended by emphasizing his message. "No one," he said, "is above the law."

Those who are unfamiliar with the AG's historic protection of dirty cops might be excused for swallowing his lines, but that gullibility didn't extend to James Queally, a *Los Angeles Times* crime-beat reporter. Nearly a week earlier, *OC Weekly* broke the news that underscores the emptiness of Becerra's rhetoric. Without fanfare in a Fullerton courtroom, Deputy AG Darren Shaffer admitted his agency had quietly ended its investigation into what has become known nationally as the Orange County jailhouse-informant scandal.

moxley CONFIDENTIAL

»R. SCOTT MOXLEY

There's no mystery as to what happened. In violation of long-established U.S. Supreme Court mandates, sheriff's deputies recruited snitches to befriend pretrial inmates, then either unethically tricked the government targets into confessing or lied about obtaining such information for jury consumption. The deputies also repeatedly committed perjury, disobeyed lawfully issued court orders, hid or destroyed evidence, and released deceitful press statements to conceal the illegal program.

On several occasions, Superior Court Judge Thomas M. Goethals, the recipient of the perjured testimony, blasted the lies as blatant. An exasperated California Court of Appeal expressed disgust by the systemic corruption inside the Orange County Sheriff's Department (OCSD) as well as the willingness of the district attorney's office under Tony Rackauckas to protect the dirty deputies. In fact, the appellate justices, none of whom anyone would consider lefties, labeled the situation "grave."

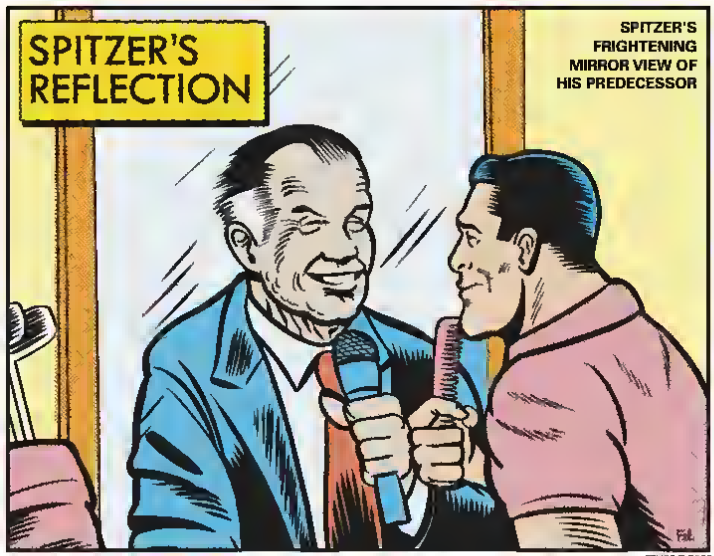
Pretending she'd hold OCSD villains accountable, then-AG Kamala Harris—a current U.S. senator running for president—announced the launch of an investigation in March 2015. After Harris left the following year without results or real effort, Becerra continued her charade, as we've previously detailed. The recent admission that the probe had ended without a single arrest or even a report isn't surprising. It was the end of a sham, one that Harris this year admitted wouldn't have resulted in the arrest of cops regardless of the evidence against them.

Politicians often bring crime victims to events as demonstrations of their compassion and tough-on-lawbreaker bona-fides. But during the AG's presser on the investment settlement, his staff blocked the entrance of Paul Wilson, who has become the ubiquitous face of victims' rights campaigns. Wilson lost his wife in the worst mass shooting in Orange County history, the 2011 Seal Beach salon murders. When the massacre occurred, Wilson believed in the righteousness of the criminal-justice system. He assumed all cops told the truth and never cheated—and if they had, they'd face punishment.

Wilson reluctantly discovered his naivety. Hearing OCSD perjury month after month, he realized—like the rest of us—the deputies believed they could cheat in his wife's case to secure the death penalty against the shooter because nobody would ever know. Trampling the constitutional rights of pretrial inmates wasn't an aberration. It was routine corruption that became the foundation of the snitch scandal, which prolonged *People v. Scott Dekraai* and the suffering of the victims' families by nearly four years.

An incredulous Wilson often asks, "Who cheats in a slam-dunk death-penalty case?"

But he just hasn't been asking questions. He has also been demanding answers. That's why, as did Rackauckas before him, Becerra banned Wilson from his events. In prior encounters, he hasn't caused any scenes. But politicians get disturbed that he stands quietly and shakes his head when he hears them lie.



FELIPE FLORES

If you don't think it's easy to unnerve these folks, consider the December 2017 immaturity of James Laird, a senior deputy DA who'd just assisted a serial killer in winning his eventual freedom because of snitch work. I'd been critical of the deal. In the aftermath, Laird held a press conference, saw somenne react to his explanation by shaking his head and stormed into the crowd thinking he was going to get in my face. But it was Wilson—not me—so Laird had to quickly retreat. A prosecutor on the verge of punching a murder-case victim isn't good publicity.

There's no doubt that with Wilson locked out of his LA press conference, Becerra—who has been fighting to keep evidence of cops' moral turpitude secret throughout the state—thought he could celebrate himself. But the aforementioned *Times* reporter Queally served as the party pooper by mentioning the failed snitch probe. He asked the AG, "You don't think you've got to give the public a little bit of an explanation here?"

Ponder the remarkable political speak Becerra uttered in response, as captured by a KABC-TV camera crew: "Accountability is something where, it has to be done in a way that guarantees not just the subjects of any investigation justice in the process, but that we'll give the public a sense of confidence in the way it's done."

With Becerra and his DOJ useless, the spotlight turns to Todd Spitzer, OC's freshman district attorney who campaigned heavily on snitch-scandal outrages to defeat Rackauckas, the 20-year incumbent. A DA must "pursue justice" and not cheat "using illegal informants," Spitzer's campaign literature declared. He also derided law-enforcement "malfeasance."

After entering the county government's most powerful office in January, Spitzer turned more tepid and declared the snitch-scandal era over. We can trust him to prevent future prosecution-team cheating, he insists. But he's either left Rackauckas' scandal-tainted prosecutors in prominent jobs or promoted them.

Wilson, whom Spitzer used as a campaign prop, is disheartened by the moves.

"Rackauckas let us down," he said. "Becerra let us down. Todd has let us down. We're not getting justice. There has to be accountability."

Our new DA faces a fast-approaching deadline to redeem himself as the anti-Rackauckas.

The statute of limitations to file charges against OCSD deputies who ran the slimy informant operations and committed already judicially recognized perjury may end within weeks of the publication of this column.

RSCOTTMOXLEY@OCWEEKLY.COM

a clockwork orange»

Poseidon't

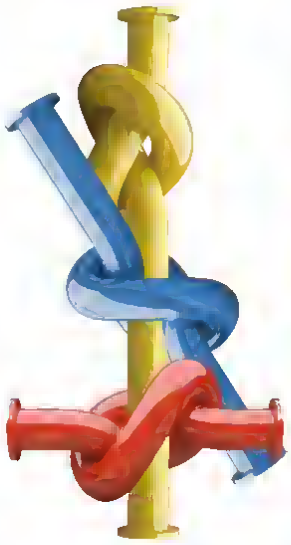
» MATT COKER

The proposed Poseidon desalination plant in Huntington Beach would drive up water bills, harming poor Orange County ratepayers without providing any water quality or reliability benefits, concludes a new study by UCLA's Luskin Center for Innovation.

"While potential positive HRW [human right to water] benefits from desalinated ocean water can occur in certain contexts, we find that no such benefits can be plausibly realized by the Poseidon agreement in Orange County," states the report's executive summary. "Nearly all of the county's households are connected to community water systems which already provide high-quality, reliable water service, and thus would not see supply improvement from ocean desalination. Those served by the county's small, underperforming systems, whose lower quality water might be improved through new desalinated supply, will not be served by the proposed agreement to purchase desalinated water. The only plausible impact of agreement water on disadvantaged households in the county will be a decrease in affordability due to higher system rates."

The UCLA findings were immediately trumpeted by Azul, which has joined fellow equity groups such as Oak View ComUNIDAD and DC Earth Stewards in arguing the plant's billion-dollar price tag would ultimately harm low-income ratepayers.

"Local residents from communities like Oak View and Santa Ana have been fighting this project for years, and the UCLA study confirms their concerns that the plant's big price tag will be passed on to ratepayers that can ill afford another $5 to $7 on their monthly water bill," says Azul's Marce Gutierrez-Graudins in an email. "Working-class families in Orange County are already struggling with the high cost of living—they don't need this billion-dollar boondoggle to stretch their budgets further."



MICHAEL ZIORKOWSKI

Victor Valladares of Oak View ComUNIDAD concludes in the same email, "This project is being driven by corporate profits, rather than community needs."

The UCLA report follows a recent independent analysis by the Municipal Water District of Orange County that found there are far more affordable ways to keep up with projected water demand—including recycling and storing rainwater—than a Poseidon plant in Surf City (see my "Tap Dance [A Clockwork Orange]," March 14).

MCOKER@OCWEEKLY.COM

HeyYou!

» ANONYMOUS

Suicide Biker

Stuck in the slogging traffic of the 5 just south of San Clemente on a Sunday evening, I catch a flash of light and check my rearview mirror. It takes a half-minute to decipher all the headlights and dim shapes behind them before I deduce that I have a motorcycle on my tail, splitting lanes. So I courteously pull to the side of my lane to let you through. As you roar by, you pound my side mirror with your fist as if to break it and deliver the finger. Proving the urgency of your passage, only a half-mile later, you weave through the traffic to the right lane and exit. Which is a good thing. If I'd been a little less steady, your assault might have startled me into jerking the wheel, and clipping your rear tire would have left a big mess on the road. Suicidal impatience is not a survival characteristic.

BOB AUL

HEY, YOU! Send anonymous thanks, confessions or accusations—changing or deleting the names of the guilty and innocent—to "Hey, You!" c/o *OC Weekly*, 18475 Bandilier Circle, Fountain Valley, CA 92708, or email us at letters@ocweekly.com.

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FOR THE LOVE OF BREAKFAST BURRITOS

WHERE TO FIND THE BEST COMBOS OF EGGS, POTATOES, CHEESE AND TORTILLA

BY **OC WEEKLY STAFF** / PHOTOS BY **MORGAN EDWARDS**

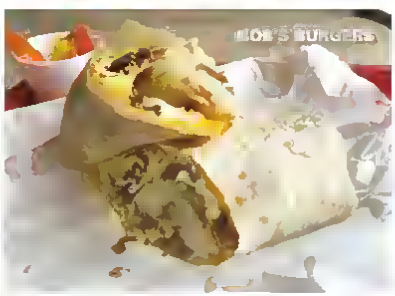
Whereas last year, our Brunch Guide paid tribute to our favorite old-school greasy spoon eateries, we wanted to get even more narrow-minded for 2019. As you probably already know from looking at the cover of this issue, this year's guide is all about breakfast burritos.

Why? Because when the *Weekly*'s crack team of food reporters—okay, it was really just our entire editorial staff—was sitting around a conference table trying to come up with something to write about, Gabriel San Román immediately suggested breakfast burritos, and a collective sigh of imagined gustatory pleasure filled the room. Suddenly, looking at one another, we realized we were simultaneously filling our heads with memories of our favorite morning gut-filler.

Just like the dish itself, the concept was a no-brainer. Let's be honest: There isn't much required to make a perfect breakfast burrito—flour tortilla, eggs, potatoes of some form (home fries, hash browns, etc.) and cheese. Whether meat—typically bacon, sausage or chorizo—is necessary is only slightly up for debate, but if you're skipping protein, you must add avocado. From there, you might add pico de gallo or some other form of salsa, but you are absolutely not allowed to include rice in a breakfast burrito (are you listening, Lila Shakti and Matt Coker²).

So with these ground rules in place, we set off on the hunt for the perfect breakfast burrito in Orange County and Long Beach. Read, follow our footsteps, and let us know what you think. And if we messed up, we'll just have to do another guide next year!

—NICK SCHOU



BOB'S BURGERS

Blessed with a name matching the TV show, Bob's Burgers in Westminster lives up to the hype, even if it's nothing like the animated comedy. Although *burger* is in the name, Bob's is a breakfast and brunch hotspot, with a breklate menu that doesn't end until 11:30 p.m. during the week and 1 p.m. on weekends, prime brunch time. Among the must-gets here is the breakfast burrito, which includes fluffy eggs, more potatoes than you can imagine; the option of ham, sausage or bacon to beef it up just a tad; and a quesadilla style-wrap that delivers a perfect mouthful of gooey cheese with every bite. You'll find a packed house early Saturdays, as families and regulars gather at their favorite local joint; there is a familiar, welcoming vibe that seemingly makes a regular out of everyone who walks in. *13891 Beach Blvd., Westminster, (714) 895-4211.* (Lauren Galvan)

TITO'S BAKERY

With all due respect to the high-end kitchens around Long Beach, when it comes to breakfast burritos, the cooks working the grill at Tito's can do more with a flat-top and a spatula than all of your Michelin stars combined. A fresh tortilla slathered with velvety-smooth refried beans lays the foundation for hand-cut potatoes, scrambled eggs, onions, cilantro; and your choice of chorizo, chicharrones, fresh-cooked bacon, or shredded beef or chicken. Simple, flavorful and cheap, each luscious bite of this $6 meal tastes like Mexico wrapped in tinfoil. Served with a grilled jalapeño with red and green salsa on the side, this thing is all killer, no filler. *1107 E. Fourth St., Long Beach, (562) 432-7272.* (Nate Jackson)

MILL BAKERY

Though it might be better known for its pan dulce—the Mill Bakery knocks out some pretty terrific pastries and bread—when the kitchen wraps some uncased sausage, eggs, Monterey jack cheese and silky refried beans in one of its flaky flour tortillas, you get an incredible, no-frills, classic breakfast burrito that's even served on a paper plate. Drench each bite in the deceptively spicy house salsa and savor the flavors. *116 W. MacArthur Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 540-7278.* (Cynthia Rebolledo)

SURFIN' DONUTS

Of all the breakfast burritos, Surfin' Donuts' stands atop my list for the most filling heap of eggs, cheese and seasoned potatoes anywhere. Add thick-cut bacon, sausage or spicy carne asada to kick it up a notch. This should only be ordered by the seriously hungry. As per its name, Surfin' Donuts also boasts some of the best doughnuts in OC, plus a variety of Diedrich's signature coffee blends and hearty breakfast options, tantalizing locals for more than 20 years. *26861 Trabuco Rd., Ste. G, Mission Viejo, (949) 455-1450, also at 1822 S. El Camino Real, San Clemente, (949) 492-1249, and 24451 Alicia Pkwy., Ste. 5, Mission Viejo, (949) 699-4926.* (Liam Blume)

MEMPHIS CAFÉ

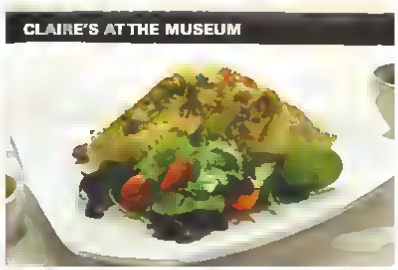
One of the few menu items without a clear link to soul cooking, this burrito is a sight to behold. Inside, it has the crucial basics of eggs, fried potatoes, pico de gallo and your choice of protein (bacon, sausage, pulled pork or chorizo, with avocado as a substitute). But it's what you get on the outside that makes it stand apart: The entire thing is slathered in chile verde sauce and melted jack and Cheddar cheese, then topped with blue-corn tortilla strips and cilantro. Pro tip: Ask for a side of the super-spicy homemade chile de arbol sauce and carefully—*carefully*—drizzle away. *2920 Bristol St., Costa Mesa, (714) 432-7685, www.memphiscafe.com.* (Nick Schou)

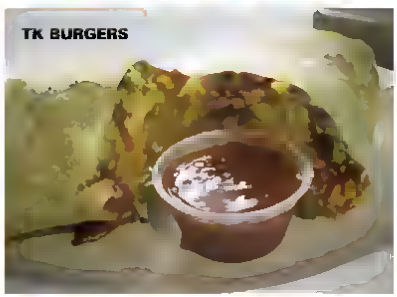
PANOOR ARTISAN BOULANGERIE & CAFÉ

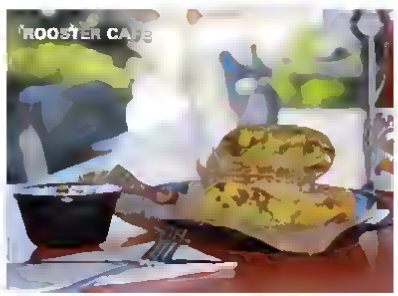
Combining the elegance of a French bistro with the casual comfort of a neighborhood eatery, Pandor Artisan Boulangerie & Cafe dishes out everything from fresh breads to Viennoiseries, from sandwiches to crepes, and from salads to savory breakfast bites. Unlike most brunch stops in Old Towne Orange, finding a seat at Pandor is easy. Everything on the menu is good here, but the dish that stands out the most is the behemoth French burrito. Fluffy scrambled eggs, diced potatoes, crumbled Spanish chorizo, tomato, onions and Swiss cheese are wrapped in a blanket-sized crepe, then drizzled with spicy harissa. The egg, cheese, potato and meat meld together for a meal that's delicious and savory. *106 N. Glassell St., Orange, (714) 912-4007, pandorbakery.com.* (CR)

CAFE CULTURA

Though Cafe Cultura (formerly Cafe Calacas) has endured many a name change and interior redesign over the lengthy course of its time in downtown SanTana, the stellar menu items have remained mostly the same. And its El







Famoso burrito's inner workings have mostly stayed the same as well. You'll still find the familiar arrangement of *huevos*; potatoes fried into a soft, light hash brown mix, Cheddar cheese; and your pick of ham or bacon. But now it's dressed with a smooth chipotle aioli sauce, the side salsa has been upgraded to a fresher pico de gallo blend, and it comes with an option to add avocado. Another subtle change? Most people might not remember it used to be named "The Gustavo" after former *OC Weekly* editor Gustavo Arellano, he kindly asked the owner to not be hyped up in food form. Though El Famoso is a sizeable feast, thanks to its delicious nature, you'll find yourself devouring it to the last crumb. *324 W. Fourth St., Ste. B, Santa Ana, (714) 662-2002, cafecitocultura.com.* (*Aimee Murillo*)

NICK'S ON 2ND

If you're in Belmont Shore, nothing goes better with a strong cup of coffee (or, if you prefer, a strong bloody Mary) than the Nick's on 2nd El Jefe breakfast burrito, which is so good it's already appeared on *OC Weekly*'s Best of list. It's a simple creation—eggs, hash browns, pico de gallo and cheese wrapped in a tortilla—that's set apart by the crumbled Nueske's bacon inside, which gives the entire meal an almost-bracing smoky flavor. Exactly what you need to cure that Sunday-morning hangover. *4901 E. Second St., Long Beach, (562) 856-9000.* (*NS*)

TK BURGERS

Walking into TK Burgers' Mission Viejo location, you feel transported to a beachside surf shack. Surfboards hang from rafters, and pictures of legendary summer swells line the walls. The laid-back vibe is surpassed only by the grub. But only the local chain's Santa Ana and Mission Viejo spots can satisfy your breakfast needs. The best burrito here is the signature TK Burrito, complete with bacon, avocado, sausage, three eggs and perfectly crisp hash browns. Add an order of fries and coffee for a complete "balanced" breakfast—just like the doctor ordered. *24902 Chrisanta Dr., Mission Viejo, (949) 588-7200; 2212 S. Lyon St., Santa Ana, (714) 545-5100; www.tkburgers.com.* (*LB*)

CLAIRE'S AT THE MUSEUM

It's no secret that most vegetarians often feel slighted by the breakfast burrito. The typical formula offers nothing in it for them. But the weekend hotspot Claire's on the back patio at the Long Beach Museum of Art has a veggie option that goes great with any Sunday brunch. Mushrooms, goat cheese, spinach, arugula, potatoes, eggs and green salsa are cradled in a warm tortilla that's been lightly grilled on the outside. It's a hearty meal that won't hurt your heart (or your stomach). And it pairs well with a mimosa and an ocean view from the bluffs. *2300 E. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach, (562) 439-2119, lbma.org/claires.* (*NJ*)

LA SIRENA GRILL

Laguna Beach has multiple swanky eateries to choose from, but when you're in the mood for Mexican food that doesn't require dressing up and a reservation, La Sirena is the place to go. At two locations in Laguna, plus one in Irvine (where breakfast is only available on weekends), you can get the best beans, rice, chips, margaritas and breakfast burritos around. The green chile burrito is filled with fluffy scrambled eggs, green chile-cheese potatoes, salsa and rice. If you're vegan, no problem, just ask for no eggs or cheese and add beans to bulk it up. The green chile adds just a hint of smoky heat, and the potatoes are crunchy and cheesy. You'll have a huge meal for less than $10. *347 Mermaid St., Laguna Beach, (949) 497-8226, also at 30862 S. Coast Hwy., Laguna Beach, (949) 499-2301, and 3931 Portola Pkwy., Irvine, (714) 508-8226, lasirenagrill.com.* (*Lila Shakti*)

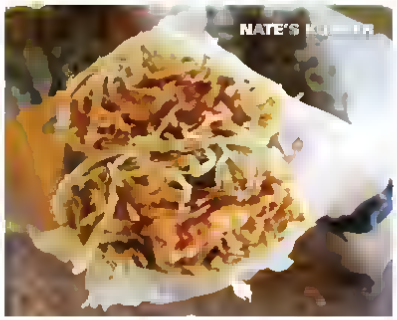
ROOSTER CAFE

As the Rooster Cafe is a no-nonsense greasy spoon, its breakfast burrito doesn't mess around with the familiar formula, which is perfect for those in the mood for a hearty protein boost wrapped up in a flour tortilla. Breakfast items are served all day here, so you can pick up your burro during a late lunch and enjoy its assemblage of ingredients: soft scrambled eggs that dominate in every bite, not-too-salted-but-salty-enough hash browns, shredded Cheddar cheese that adds a mild tanginess, and your choice of bacon, Portugese sausage, or both! The pulpy tomato salsa that comes on the side is an added bonus, bringing a delightful freshness to the gang of starches colliding in your mouth. While you couldn't go wrong with any of the items on Rooster Cafe's menu, its breakfast burrito is the MVP. *750 St. Clair St., Costa Mesa, (714) 754-1944, eatatrooster.com.* (*AM*)

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

FOR THE LOVE OF BREAKFAST BURRITOS

» FROM PAGE 9



NATE'S KORNER

Adding hash browns to your breakfast burrito is kind of like playing a game of Russian roulette: are they going to be mushy, a carb-coma-inducing filler? Or are they going to bless you with their crunchy goodness? Even if you end up with the latter, you still run the risk of them soaking your tortilla in grease. This can make or break your breakfast. Luckily, the folks at Nate's Korner have perfected the art of the hash brown. They're light, crispy and probably pretty unhealthy, but at least they won't leave you feeling as if you just ate a greasy mess. The other vital components of this burrito are two runny eggs, after a few bites, the yolk starts to marinate the fried potatoes and your choice of meat alongside some homemade salsa, which is a pleasant balance of sweet and spicy. All of this deliciousness is wrapped inside a gigantic, fresh tortilla, making for a burrito about the size of a newborn baby. Nate's Korner is only open until 3 p.m., parking is sparse, and there's often a line during peak hours, but it's worth the wait. *3960 S. Main St., Ste. D, Santa Ana, (714) 545-5772, www.nateskorner.com.* (Steve Donofrio)

LOS PRIMOS CANTINA

I first became acquainted with Los Primos years ago, when I was not eating beef or pork. I settled on the "Dr. Carlos Famous Vegetarian Burrito." With two huge flour tortillas stuffed with rice, black beans, jack and Cheddar cheeses, lettuce, tomato, onions, sour cream, guacamole, and salsa, it was the size of a puppy. Half became lunch the next day. I hadn't been back to the casual Mexican spot at Brookhurst and Adams for some time until a neighbor took a breakfast burrito order when I was over at his house. After delivering the goods, he informed me that my tab was only $3. Expecting a tiny morsel, it was a regular-sized burro filled with three eggs along with jack, Cheddar, salsa and refried beans. (You can get black beans instead.) "Where'd you get this?" I asked. "Los Primos," said my friend, and the joint immediately returned to my local Mexican rotation. Since this is a brunch issue, allow me to steer you to a more appropriate recent discovery: the "Moot Special." A flour tortilla encases the usual three freshly scrambled eggs one associates with breakfast. If you're adventurous with morning meals, the black beans, guacamole and salsa (hot, mild or medium) also fit. But the Moot also features the lunchtime staples of lettuce, Spanish rice and shredded chicken. Heck, it's brunch in a tortilla—for only $7.50! Breakfast tacos and burritos are served all day, but I really hated breaking up the Spanish-language party that was going on when I dropped in the other day. The sounds of *futbol* highlights on the dining-area television mixed with native-tongue conversations between employees and half a dozen or so construction workers on lunch break. I flunked high school Spanish, but shouldn't I have been ordering an "*Especial* de Moot"? *10176 Adams Ave., Huntington Beach, (714) 962-7735, also at 488 E. 17th St., Ste. A-106, Costa Mesa, (949) 650-1486.* (Matt Coker)

A'S BURGERS

While some breakfast burritos boast hearty portions of eggs and others rely on savory meats or unique sauces, the ones at A's Burgers specialize in fresh, seasoned potatoes and a flow of molten cheese. Each burrito is made fresh to order with enough cheese to bury a small village. Of A's Burgers' two locations, the San Juan Capistrano spot is a favorite of Saddleback College students looking for an affordable, hearty breakfast. Try the western burrito, made with egg, ham and fresh peppers—all for less than $5! The Dana Point store, located right across from Doheny Beach along Pacific Coast Highway, is the more scenic of the two. And a burrito from this location is perfect for surfers fresh out the water. If a burrito ain't your style, grab a stack of pancakes or an egg sandwich instead. *34344 Pacific Coast Hwy., Dana Point, (949) 496-4460, also at 28698 Camino Capistrano, San Juan Capistrano, (949) 364-2099.* (LB)

SANCHO'S TACOS

As I bit into the Sawed Off Burrito at Sancho's Tacos, I expected to be most pleased by the mix of fresh eggs, skillet potatoes, Cheddar-jack cheese and applewood smoked bacon wrapped in a grilled flour tortilla. But what really blew me away was the 5150 Salsa, which, though it's the hottest served there, starts with a familiar texture and sweetness that I thought was applesauce. (A second taster suggested the sugary ingredient was green and yellow tomatillos.) The mix of the salsa and applewood smoke was so tasty I found myself taking bigger-than-normal bites, which caused a four-alarm fire in my mouth when the sauce's super-spicy finish kicked in. (The liquids that poured out of my upper orifices now dot the Sancho's parking lot.) When it comes to Sawed Off meat, chorizo and boneless chicken breast are other options. And for those horrified by the caloric count of what's been described above, the menu includes the Sawed Off Flaco, for which the tortilla is filled with egg whites, potatoes, sautéed spinach, mushrooms, artichoke hearts, avocado and your choice of salsa. Either version of Sawed Off is $8.35. Too rich for your blood type? Any breakfast burrito can be prepared as a taco, in either a corn or flour tortilla, for $5.75, and any breakfast item can be turned into an omelet for an extra buck. Whatever you order, you can't beat the location, which is filled with odd items, righteous tunes and Mexico-meets-Vans-skate-park murals. Take your breakfast basket outside and enjoy the live vibes of life courtesy of the pier, the beach, the shops, the traffic and souls of every stripe. *602 Pacific Coast Hwy., Huntington Beach, (714) 536-8226, also at 3014 W. Balboa Blvd., Newport Beach, (949) 723-8226, www.sanchostacos.com.* (MC)

ATHENIAN BURGER #3

While Athenian Burger boasts about its offerings in a banner that reads, "home of the breakfast burritos," one stands above the rest. The Suicide Burrito comes wrapped in a flour tortilla tinted with a bolder shade of orange than your morning juice. A slice through the middle summons a puff of steam, then reveals a thin omelet fastened to the tortilla by gooey, melted Cheddar cheese. Neither too crispy nor too soggy, a hefty helping of hash browns forms its carb core. But its true claim to fame comes from its hegemony of hog: Crispy strips of bacon give it crunch, plump ham chunks are woven into the omelet, and mashed-up sausage links round out the pork trifecta. Every bite is a feast of meat guaranteed to hold folks over for hours past lunch time. The burrito comes with a side of salsa verde, perfect to turn up the heat after every bite. We don't know why it's called a suicide burrito, but there's no more life-affirming way to start the day! *8511 La Palma Ave., Buena Park, (714) 523-9999.* (Gabriel San Roman)

TREVOR'S AT THE TRACKS

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JOAN MARCUS

fri/05/03

[THEATER]

Slight, Not Small

One Slight Hitch

Hilarious professional political fulminator, standup comic, actor and playwright Lewis Black might tell you—or yell at you—that his charmingly vicious, or viciously funny, even sweet, two-act play, *One Slight Hitch*, is absolutely not a recent too-easy rom-com with a different adjective in the title. Black's reliably sarcastic play, set in Ronald Reagan's politically ripe-for-the-picking 1981, isn't slight or insubstantial, but rather an old-school screwball farce with brains about family and love, with one-liners flying fast, even as the absurd if believable physical set-up—the return of ex-boyfriend on daughter's wedding day—gives the cast plenty to do while they deliver them.

One Slight Hitch at STAGESheatre, 400 E. Commonwealth Ave., Ste. 4, Fullerton, (714) 525-4484; stagesoc.org. 8 p.m. Through May 19. $22-$24. —ANDREW TONKOVICH

[FESTIVAL]

The Aughts Have It

Just Like Heaven Fest

Kids of the mid-2000s will forever remember those years as the most fruitful for indie rock. It was a time when bands such as the Yeah Yeahs Yeahs, Phoenix, Grizzly Bear and Passion Pit churned out hits as they rose to prominence. Now, with another great niche festival popping up at the *Queen Mary*, those bands and a slew of others from that era will dust off memories of a decade not-so-long-gone for this one-off fest. An extra day was even added to capitalize on this nostalgia. Though the bands on the bill haven't given up just yet, this celebration of their onetime glory, plus the promise of larger headlining sets, will allow fans and artists to reconnect.

Just Like Heaven Fest at the *Queen Mary*, 1126 Queens Hwy., Long Beach, (877) 342-0738, justlikeheavenfest.com. 11:30 a.m., also Sat. $125-$270. —WYOMING REYNOLDS

sat/05/04

[POP CULTURE]

GEEKIN' OUT

Geek Meet

On a day that many call a holiday, nerds of all ages who love *Star Wars* are welcome at the monthly Geek Meet. The event offers costume contests, with $200 in cash and prizes for the winners, and games that include Cards Against Humanity and *Star Wars* trivia, plus there will even be Galactic Karaoke. Come prepared to jump up onstage and sing with a wookiee. May the Fourth be with you!

MORE ONLINE
OCWEEKLY.COM

Geek Meet at Slideber Rock-N-Roll Kitchen, 122 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, (714) 871-2233, www.slideberfullerton.com. 5 p.m. Free. —LAUREN GALVAN

[FILM]

The Final Frontier

Starship Frida

All right, space cadets, have you got your Captain Video helmets on? The Frida Cinema is hosting a 12-hour marathon that begins at 8 p.m., when the screen is set to stun with a collection of science-fiction films that provide an action-packed, mysterious journey through the genre! Naturally, the mysteries of the universe (or, in this case, the film lineup) are unknown, but giveaways and surprises have been promised by the good folks at the Starship Frida! If this sounds like your cup of tea, then make it so!

Starship Frida 12-Hour Intergalactic Sci-Fi Marathon at the Frida Cinema, 305 E. Fourth St., Ste. 100, Santa Ana, (714) 285-9422, thefridacinema.org. 8 p.m. $20. —SCOTT FEINBLATT

sun/05/05

[FOOD & DRINK]

Cinco de Meditate

Cinco de Asana

The only thing better than relaxing yoga, scrumptious tacos and margaritas is getting to downward dog, crunch and sip in the same afternoon. At Happy Flow Yoga's Cinco de Asana event, you can attend a special Buti class taught by Valerie Cabag that will get you in the flow with tribal, primal movements that energize and release. Or, you can go to the Happy Flow class, which features inspiring music and a guided meditation to get you into that tranquil, Zen frame of mind. We won't tell if you happen to meditate on tequila and limes afterward, as there will be street tacos and margaritas served up after that day's classes.

Cinco de Asana at Happy Flow Yoga, 229 E. Commonwealth Ave., Ste. C, Fullerton, (714) 414-3591, www.happyflowyogastudio.com. Buti, 1:30 p.m., Happy Flow, 3 p.m. $5 per class for non-members. —LILA SHAKTI

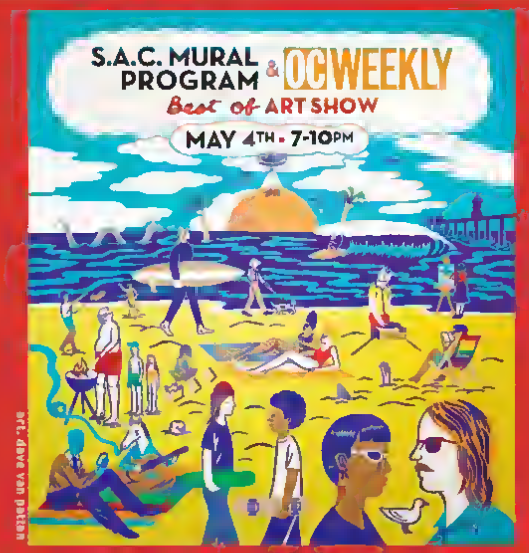
[PETS]

Furry Fiesta

Cinco de Doggo

The Museum of Latin American Art is allowing visitors to bring their furry pals to enjoy diverse works of art and participate in making some as well. Dogs can leave a painted paw print on resident artists Chiachio & Giannone's Pride flag, which will be displayed at the upcoming Long Beach Pride Parade. Doggy yoga, workshops, a photo booth and a pet spa will also be on-site, as well as vendors and a puppy valet. There's even a fashion show for the best-dressed four-legged fashionista.

Cinco de Doggo at Museum of Latin American Art, 628 Alamitos Ave., Long Beach, (562) 437-1689, www.molaa.org. Noon. $30 —AIMEE MURILLO



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CRISSELLE MENDIOLA • JASON PEREIRA • DAYE VAN PATTON

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ANA ROJO • BETTY JIANG • CARMEN VEGA • PAUL PENA • CARLOS PINA
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mon/05/06

[FASHION]

Fashionably Televised

MET Gala Red Carpet Live Stream

Gather your glam squad and step up your fashion game as the Bowers Museum hosts a live screening of the MET Gala Red Carpet. Watch E! Red Carpet coverage of this year's event, "Camp: Notes on Fashion," while enjoying drinks and refreshments and, if you dress according to the theme, competing for the title of Bowers' Best Dressed. Following the broadcast is a screening of *The First Monday in May*, a behind-the-scenes look at the 2015 exhibition, which explored Chinese influence on Western fashion.

The MET Gala Red Carpet Broadcast at Bowers Museum, 2002 N. Main St., Santa Ana, (714) 567-3677, www.bowers.org. 5:30 p.m. $75-$85 —MORGAN EDWARDS

tue/05/07

[PERFORMING ARTS]

Sunrise, Sunset

Fiddler on the Roof

It's not just a musical, but also, as the song goes, "Tradition." This symbolic tale of the lives and struggles of a Jewish community in a pre-revolutionary Russian village depicts the hardships of life in a poor village, the clash of culture and religion, and the reality of anti-semitic regimes—all within the framework of a spiritually uplifting musical. Since the story's origin in the 19th-century play *Tevye the Dairyman*, *Fiddler on the Roof* has seen plenty of life as a Tony Award-winning Broadway musical and an Oscar-winning film, and now it's visiting Segerstrom Center for the Arts with a lauded creative team.

Fiddler on the Roof at Segerstrom Hall, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 556-2787, www.scfta.org. 7:30 p.m. Through May 19. $29-$119 —SCOTT FEINBLATT

wed/05/08

[ART]

RAPPER'S DELIGHT

'Custom Beats: The Art of Hip-Hop'

In less than half a century, hip-hop has evolved from a niche urban genre into a multibillion-dollar industry. "Custom Beats: The Art of Hip-Hop" explores the musical and cultural roots of the genre and the various ways it imbues our contemporary society. Jazz, street art and Reebok tracksuits are just a few of the subjects that are examined as the basis for what has become an internationally recognizable lifestyle. This is an opportunity for fans and skeptics alike to learn about how hip-hop is an increasingly relevant form of expression for younger generations.

"Custom Beats: The Art of Hip-Hop" at Fullerton Museum Center, 301 N. Pomona Ave., Fullerton, (714) 738-6545, cityoffullerton.com/museum. 6 p.m. Through Aug. 4. $20. —STEVE DONOFRIO

[THEATER]

Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark

Creep

Calling all Goths, romantics and those who thrill when they get chills hearing bumps in the night: The Chance Theater invites you to a one-night-only staged reading of John Glore's Edgar Allen Poe-inspired play *Creep*. Directed by Oanh Nguyen, the story is placed within Poe's iconic *Mask of the Red Death* short-story scenario, in which elite revelers party the night away while the Black Plague ravages peasants outside the castle walls, but this time, à la *Vault of Horror*/*Tales From the Crypt*, the celebrants reveal their own terrifying tales of "murder, mayhem and supernatural malice"—until an uninvited party guest really turns their blood cold with a deathly surprise! Enhanced by a rock-music score, this is one macabre piece of merriment you don't want to miss!

Creep at Chance Theater, 5522 E. La Palma Ave., Anaheim, (888) 455-4212; www.chancetheater.com. 7:30 p.m. $13-$15. —SR DAVIES

thu/05/09

[CABARET]

The Countess Has Arrived

Countess and Friends

Gracing Orange County with her presence, Countess Luann de Lesseps brings her campy, hit cabaret show to Anaheim as part of her cross-country tour. It's been nearly a year since her plea deal over that scuffle in Palm Beach, and if anything, the controversy (and subsequent rehab stay) only boosted her star power in the *Housewives* universe. She's no Erika Jayne, but the evening is sure to be one of black-tie costume changes, sparkling statement necklaces, and throaty renditions of "Money Can't Buy You Class" and "Chic, C'est la Vie." Helmed by Grammy-nominated musical director Billy Stritch, the "and Friends" portion of the show can include any number of surprise guests, singers or comedians, but you *know* everyone's hoping for another Sonja duet.

Countess and Friends at City National Grove of Anaheim, 2200 E. Katella Ave., Anaheim, (714) 712-2700, www.citynationalgroveofanaheim.com. 8 p.m. $45-$65. —ERIN DEWITT

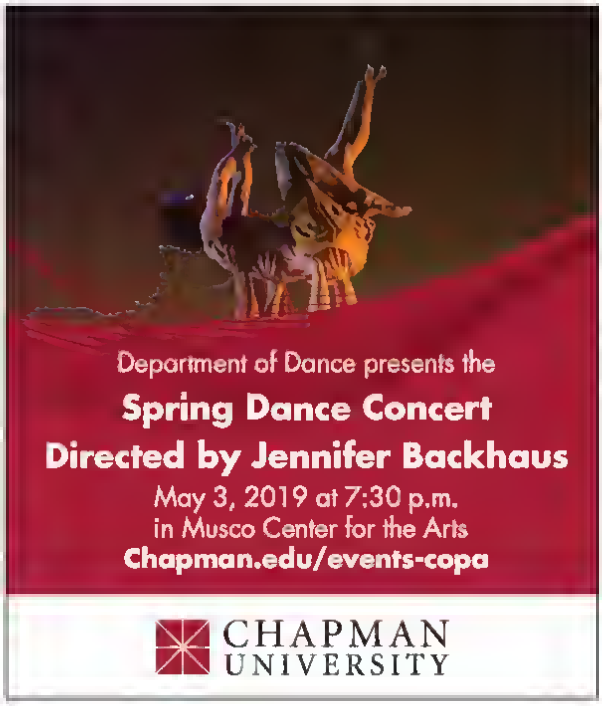
[CONCERT]

WILDIN' OUT

The Thingz and the Slow Poisoner

Long Beach's the Thingz don't complicate the sound and template of garage punk, but their music comes off as playful just the same. This trio of musicians have explored numerous odd themes in their songs, from aliens to technology, while each tune radiates with a tough attitude best-suited for a movie soundtrack about nail-to-do-well bikers living fast on the road. They're joined by San Francisco-based one-man band the Slow Poisoner, who presents a wildly surreal show filled with unpredictable theatrics and horror-themed mayhem. If you're wanting a show experience to uplift you with its bizarre antics and rock & roll tunes, this is it.

The Thingz with the Slow Poisoner at the Pike Restaurant and Bar, 1636 E. Fourth St., Long Beach, (562) 437-4453; www.facebook.com/thethingz. 9 p.m. Free. —AIMEE MURILLO



GARDENAMP EVENTS

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THE AQUADOLLS YOUR FAVORITE COLOR, NEW FOSSILS, MAL LONDON	TRIBUTE TO SELENA	CHANNEL 3, GREG ANTISTA AND THE LONELY STREETS RECORD RELEASE	BURRITOS (SUBLIME TRIBUTE), CALI'FIA, SPECIAL BLEND	DRAMARAMA
MAY 19TH	**JUNE 8TH**	**JUNE 14TH**	**JUNE 15TH**	**JUNE 21ST**
COREY TAYLOR, THE CHERRY BOMBS +MORE	WAILING SOULS	AC/DC, GUNS N ROSES, SCORPIONS, AND LYNARD SKYNARD TRIBUTE	JOURNEY, FLEETWOOD MAC, U2 TRIBUTE NITE	THE SMITHS, DURAN DURAN, DEPECHE MODE AND THE BANSHEES, JOY DIVISION TRIBUTES
JUNE 23RD	**JUNE 28TH**	**JULY 6TH**	**JULY 27TH**	**AUG 10TH**
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HUMMUS WHERE THE HEART IS

EDWIN GOEI

Pita the Foul

A man of few words serves falafel, foul and hummus at F & H Shack

BY EDWIN GOEI

There's just one person working inside the new F & H Shack in Little Arabia, and he is a man of few words. Middle-aged with creases on his face, he is wearing not a uniform, but an unbuttoned polo shirt that made him resemble a customer. It wasn't until he brought more pita bread to a table where three other men ate that I realized he was the proprietor.

When I went up to order, the man didn't say hello or offer any help in navigating the menu. He didn't have to. If you're new to Middle Eastern cuisine, F & H Shack is probably the least intimidating restaurant in Anaheim's Arab enclave. It serves exactly three things: falafel, hummus and foul, each available as either a sandwich or a plate.

Out of habit, I held up the one-sheet menu and pointed to the things I wanted as I said them. The man, as if to confirm my choices, repeated my order.

"Falafel sandwich."

"Hummus plate."

"Foul plate."

I finished by asking for a Fanta.

"Take," he said, motioning to the display case of bottled drinks.

As I grabbed one, he anticipated my need for a bottle opener and pointed to one lying on a counter next to the fridge. I popped the cap and found a seat at one of the four tables. The dining room was no bigger than the tiniest Subway, with the restroom about 10 feet from where I sat near the door.

The three men were just finishing up their meal when I noticed the large glass-pane window wobbling as though there were a strong wind. After glancing at the palm trees in the parking lot, I concluded there was hardly a breeze. Did the window wobble because it's a replacement? Since no curb exists to separate the building from the parking lot, did a car accidentally back into the restaurant before? And was this the reason a protective white picket fence was recently installed out front?

These were questions I knew the man would be loath to answer. But even before I decided not to ask him, he arrived with the food, which required no further explanation. The three dishes represent the versatility of the chickpea and fava bean. It's vegan without even trying.

The falafel was just as good, if not better, than the one I've had at Sahara Falafel just down the street. The crisply fried, craggy croquettes were lightly chopped, then tucked into the pocket of a pita with sliced tomato, shredded lettuce, cucumber, pickled turnips, smears of hummus and a white sauce. Bursting with so much freshness, contrasting textures and temperatures, it was the kind of sandwich that can convince you a vegan lifestyle is doable.

If the falafel doesn't do it, the foul (pronounced "fool") certainly will. It resembled bean dip, but it was served warm and submerged beneath a thin layer of garlic, lemon juice and olive oil. Traditionally eaten as breakfast in just about all the Arab countries, it's served all day at F & H Shack and garnished with whole chickpeas and dollops of a spicy relish made from pickled jalapeños. Even if you choose not to use the basket of toasty pita bread for dipping, the foul is still filling. The accompanying bowl of tomato, cucumber and tart, pink, pickled turnips is more essential to the experience. You need it to balance the richness of the beans with something vibrant.

And, of course, there's the hummus. It's sculpted into cresting swirls with a well in the middle where olive oil pools and a small hill of whole chickpeas was garnished with parsley and sumac. Was it the epitome of hummus? It might well be. As thick and as smooth as clotted cream and heightened by the other ingredients, this was to Trader Joe's hummus tubs what steak is to a hamburger.

As I paid for my meal, I told the man how much I enjoyed his food. He, by the way, didn't ask.

Further attempting to fill the silence as he swiped my credit card I asked, "Did you make it all by yourself?"

"Yes," he said, looking puzzled.

I realized he thought it was a silly question when it became obvious to both of us he was the only one there. I imagine if he weren't cooking here, he'd do it in a street cart. And there would be lines down the block with no one asking if he made it all himself.

F & H SHACK
512 S. Brookhurst St., Ste. 8, Anaheim, (714) 860-4266. Open daily, 8 a.m.–10 p.m. All dishes, $4.99.

WHAT THE ALE
» GREG NAGEL

What Pairs With Oysters?

What beer pairs best with raw oysters? I sat down with Fabrice Poign, culinary director of King's Seafood Co., to dive into what style of brew makes a bivalve truly pop with flavor.

At King's Fish House (*1521 W. Katella Ave., Orange, 714-771-6655, www.kingsseafood.com, also from the King's Seafood group: Water Grill, 3300 Bristol St., Costa Mesa, 949-208-7060; www.watergrill.com*), there are a dozen varieties of East and West Coast oysters at the raw bar this time of year. King's has wild oysters, rock and bagged, off-bottom cage, suspended cage, and ones with silly names such as the Fat Bastard or the Moo Moo, and each is shucked fresh to order.

Just as with beer ingredients, how and where oysters are grown affects how they taste.

An IPA is just too big and bold, overpowering the seafood's subtle fruity briny character. So we went with lighter and brighter beers that have minimal bitterness. The goal is to enjoy both the beer and the oyster.

"I think we should go with Barley Forge's Nom Nom," Poign says with a soft French accent.

I picked a Belgian golden strong, a witbier and a Vienna lager.

In our tasting, there was a definite overall winner. Nom Nom mango hefeweizen from Barley Forge (*2957 Randolph Ave., Ste. D, Costa Mesa, 714-641-2044, barleyforge.com*) paired perfectly with the Kumamoto, which is the most popular oyster at King's by far. Although it's the smallest, it packs big flavors. Brought in fresh from either Baja or Humboldt Bay, the oysters have a sweet, fruity finish that works incredibly well with the wheaty, fruit-forward beer.

Got a favorite food and beer pairing? Let us know!

LETTERS@OCWEEKLY.COM

GREG NAGEL

Tustin Santa Ana Rotary
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Saturday, May 18, 2019 @ 4 p.m.
Peppertree Park, Tustin.
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Bar Essential

Brunch drinks are better with Micho & Mary

ERIN DEWITT

We're all about bottomless mimosas during brunch. Champagne plus fresh-squeezed orange juice always equals a good time. But for something savory, it has to be a Michelada or a Bloody something (Mary, Maria, Caesar, etc., basically, booze swirled with a seasoned, tomato-based mixer).

They're delicious, no doubt, but the commonly used thick, gloppy, bottled mix holds almost a day's worth of sodium in a single serving, not to mention a load of other preservative nonsense. Though some restaurants make their own mix, it's still a fairly rare practice.

"I considered myself kind of a connoisseur," says Micho & Mary founder Krystal Ray Moreno. Traveling around the country with television stations such as Food Network and Bravo, for which she worked as an audio mixer, she found herself in new towns on the regular. "Depending where I was, my drink was either a Michelada or a Bloody Mary. It was like a hobby trying to find the best one, but eventually, I got tired of the bloating and heartburn."

So, she made her own. "It was kind of an accident," she says with a shrug. "I was messing around in the kitchen, like, if this is going to be my go-to drink, I need to come up with something just for me and that is easy on the stomach."

Growing up on a farm in Gilroy, a.k.a. the garlic capital of the world, Moreno recalls "everything was organic and freshly made." That ideology led her to create a recipe that was light and sharp.

But Moreno had no intention of starting a business. She'd whip up a batch of her mix and bring it to parties. It was a hit, to say the least. "Next thing, I was always asked to be the bartender," she says with a laugh. "People would be like, 'Don't come unless you bring that mix!'"

LongBeachLunch

» ERIN DEWITT

In 2015, she entered her mix in Southern California's largest Michelada festival, Michelada Rumble, and out of dozens of national and high-volume companies, she took second place. That's when she realized she should do something more with it.

Bottled in nearby Cerritos, Micho & Mary (*michoandmary.com*) is handcrafted in small batches with a focus on fresh ingredients and carefully selected spices. The mix is currently available in several cities in NorCal, OC and LA, including Long Beach's Hops and Vines.

Working out of an office in downtown Long Beach, Moreno says the next step for Micho & Mary is to roll out a vegan mix (the current recipe includes a bit of shellfish). "The goal is to phase out the OG version and go completely vegan," she says. The all-veggie recipe is currently being tested for shelf life, and fans can expect to see the new product launch soon.

So what does Moreno prefer to mix her Micho & Mary with? "Bloody Marias are my favorite," she says, using Casamigos Reposado tequila.

But if it's going to be a Michelada, then she opts for Corona Familiar or Pacifico. A squeeze of lime and a Tajin rim, and it's a perfect beverage—no need for over-the-top garnishes. "The less stuff, the better," Moreno says. "I'm not about a sirloin slider in my drink."

We predict Micho & Mary will be everywhere soon, but in the meantime, keep an eye out for it at a slew of festivals this season, including Saturday's Long Beach Seafood Festival at Shoreline Aquatic Park.

LETTERS@OCWEEKLY.COM

Beer Brunch

Beachwood BBQ's Southern-inspired breakfast

GREG NAGEL

I'm not sure what is more surprising: that I'm sitting at Beachwood BBQ's bar at 8:45 a.m., or that I have two beverages in front of me. One is a Funkmosa, which blends a Belgian-style sour ale from Beachwood Blendery with orange juice, and the other is a French press filled with fresh coffee, accompanied by an hourglass and an empty mug. "When the sand runs out, your coffee is ready," explains Beachwood co-owner Gabe Gordon.

You won't find a glass carafe sitting on a burner as you do at the usual breakfast joints. "How hard is it to get fresh coffee at a place that serves breakfast?" he fumes, perturbed by the idea. As you plunge your own French press and fill your mug with what the menu calls PMA (Positive Morning Attitude), a quick glance at the rest of your options reveals a lot of hard decisions.

"The menu took over a year to develop," Gordon says. "We didn't want to do it unless we knew it was going to be rad." Breakfast at the Seal Beach location revolves around fun plays on Southern-style staples—instead of chicken and waffles, think chicken and churros. Craving eggs Benedict? The Beachwood version uses house-made hush puppy tostones, smoky ham, marinated green tomato, a 63-degree sous vide egg, and a citrus hollandaise that pairs perfectly with the Funkmosa.

If you've followed Beachwood's lineage, seeing something like a Funkmosa shouldn't be a surprise since the Belgian-inspired Beachwood Blendery has taken off with wild, funky and sour beers. "The beer that goes in the Funkmosa is super-fun," Gordon says. "It was basically an overreaction to how our program was going over at the Blendery . . . We made a bunch of quick sours that went way overboard, and they're perfect with fresh-squeezed OJ." Instead of fruiting a sour, the drink is made behind the bar, with the result creamy, frothy and worthy of a second.

I meant to order biscuits and gravy, but somehow, "smoked garlic buttermilk biscuit sandwich," is what I spoke—and I'm glad I did. The dish is served open-faced with two bug-eyed, sunny-side-up eggs and an applewood-smoked bacon smile. Pimento cheese and tomato marmalade round out the bite, and the fruit makes a great garnish for your Funkmosa.

"We wanted to push the bar as far as we could with breakfast," Gordon says. It seems the menu, available daily from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m., was designed with a nap in mind. Luckily, the caffeine program has enough juice to balance things out. In addition to the French press PMA, a single-origin Ethiopian roast that was aged in Merlot barrels is available. If you want things a little fizzy and cold, a couple of nitro pours are offered, including Dark Side of the Noon.

And let's not forget Beachwood's countless awards for coffee-infused house beers, as Mocha Machine and System of a Stout are just two brunch-worthy beverages in a glass.

Eat & Drink This Now

» GREG NAGEL

BEACHWOOD BBQ
131 1/2 Main St., Seal Beach, (562) 493-4500; beachwoodbbq.com

Riot Ghoul

Elisabeth Moss rocks her own world in *Her Smell*

BY MATT COKER

BOW AND ARROW ENTERTAINMENT

When we meet riot grrrl Becky Something, she is in full VH1 *Behind the Music* meltdown mode. Played by Elisabeth Moss, the fictional '90s punker is backstage at a cesspool of enjoyment with the exhausted band mates from her all-female trio Something She. Becky's ongoing self-destruction put them there, as Something She used to fill large arenas.

Courtney Love and her band Hole immediately sprang to my mind as I watched Moss' tour de force performance, but writer/director Alex Ross Perry (*Listen Up Philip*, *Golden Exits*) has said that L7 and the rawk band he really crushes on, Guns N' Roses, inspired *Her Smell*. (The tiny indie drama's title is a mashup of the L7 albums *Smell the Magic* and *Hungry for Stink* and the underground riot grrrl zines *Ladyparts* and *Her Jazz*.)

Perry and Moss, who is a producer on the project along with the filmmaker and four others, previously teamed on 2014's *Listen Up Philip*, in which she played a photographer drifting from her novelist boyfriend (portrayed by Jason Schwartzman), and the following year's *Queen of Earth*, in which she appeared as a famous artist's daughter who goes to pieces during a weeklong stay at a friend's country house.

The writer obviously penned *Her Smell* for no one but Moss, who has mastered bringing out the stark dualities of female characters not only as *Queen of Earth*'s Catherine, but also as *Mad Men*'s Peggy Olson, Kitty/Dahlia in Jordan Peele's *Us*, the two Sophies from Charlie McDowell's *The One I Love* and, of course, Offred/June in *The Handmaid's Tale* (whose third season drops on June 5).

Very "bad" Becky's counterbalance is sympathy-worthy Rebecca, who is stripped of her makeup, costumes, stardom, confidence and bad-ass 'tude when we witness her sober recovery later in the picture. Perry has said he was fresh off seeing Shakespeare plays in New York when he decided on a five-act structure for *Her Smell*, which amazingly has few camera breaks in each section, even when the action moves from room to room. Cinematographer Sean Price Williams, who has worked on every Perry movie since 2009's *Impolex*, shot on 35mm film to plunge *Her Smell* back into the 1990s.

Performances throughout the film rely on non-musician Moss not only appearing rock-star proficient at playing the piano and acoustic and electric guitars, but also carrying tunes as a vocalist. She handles those tasks well enough that you are never taken out of the picture. It helps that we're talking about grunge and power pop, not opera or the vocal Olympics of today's R&B, as well as that Moss must fumble in the studio during Becky's flameout.

Helping her sell it are surrounding players casting directors of other small movies could only dream of snagging, although the standout for me may be the least known of the bunch. As Something She's hassist Marielle Hell, Agyness Deyn conveys the heartbreak experienced in the shadows of a crumbling great talent you happen to love. Manchester, U.K.-born Deyn, who is also a model and designer, appears in the current BBC/Hulu series *Hard Sun*. (Fun fact: She was married for a couple of years and change to Giovanni Ribisi, who, like Moss, is a practicing Scientologist.)

Other fashion models who pop up in *Her Smell* and give convincing performances are Amber Heard, Cara Delevingne and Ashley Benson. Heard, of course, continues to make headlines thanks to her legal battle with her ex Johnny Depp, which even overshadowed her co-star turn with Jason Momoa in the recent comic-book blockbuster *Aquaman*. Jet-black hair makes her nearly unrecognizable as Becky's regal rock rival Zelda E. Zekiel.

As Crassie Cassie, a member of a new all-girl trio that threatens to eclipse Something She, Delevingne leans on her real-life chops as a singer and drummer. The style icon with more than 500 Instagram followers previously appeared in *Suicide Squad* and Luc Besson's *Valerian and the City of a Thousand Planets*, which includes one of her original songs. Anaheim-born Ashley Benson (Delevingne's real-life girlfriend), who plays Crassie Cassie's hit-making hand mate Roxie Rotten, hails from Harmony Korine's *Spring Breakers* and the smash TV series *Pretty Little Liars*.

I have an embarrassing confession when it comes to the actress playing Something She's drummer. Fresh off episodes of ABC's *The Goldbergs* and *Schooled*, which both feature AJ Michalka, I thought she was in dyed hair and heavy makeup as *Her Smell*'s Ali van der Wolff. Nope, it's Gayle Rankin, a real-life friend of L7 hassist Jennifer Finch and, on *GLOW*, the lauded Netflix series based on the formation of the Gorgeous Ladies of Wrestling. Sheila the She-Wolf. But get this: Perry is about to direct his third music video for Michalka's sister-act duo Aly & AJ, which comes to the House of Blues in Anaheim on June 23.

Her Smell also gets solid support from veteran actors Eric Stoltz, as Something She's long-suffering producer and record label owner; Virginia Madsen, as Rebecca's long-suffering (former stage) mother; and Dan Stevens, of *Downton Abbey* and FX's *Legion* fame, as Becky's long-suffering ex-husband. All three went along for the ride of Something She's huge success, which explains why they are still sticking by their moneymaker long after her expiration date. It's especially heartwrenching when it comes to Stevens' "Dirtbag Danny," who was forced into being the mother Becky never could be to their daughter.

The first three acts, which occur backstage and in recording studios, are so suffocating that you don't get to breathe again until the film reaches the country home where Rebecca rebuilds her broken life. My fear is Becky is so odious for so long that audiences will have already given up on her. Then again, plenty of us are still rooting for Courtney Love.

MCOKER@OCWEEKLY.COM

HER SMELL

was written and directed by Alex Ross Perry; and stars Elisabeth Moss, Cara Delevingne and Dan Stevens. Opens Fri. at the Frida Cinema, Santa Ana.

Dance With the Devil in the Pale Moonlight

BY MATT COKER

High Life. A father (Robert Pattinson) and baby daughter live in isolation in deep space, where they struggle to survive. *Art Theatre, arttheatrelongbeach.org. Thurs., May 2, 1:30, 4, 6:30 & 9 p.m. $9-$12.*

Little Woods. An ex-con (Tessa Thompson) must decide whether to resume smuggling illegal pills so she can save the family home from foreclosure as her sister (Lily James) reels from an unplanned pregnancy. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Thurs., May 2, 2, 5 & 7:30 p.m. $7-$10.*

Time Bandits. A young history buff (Craig Warnock) joins six little people who emerge from his closet on intergalactic adventurers through holes in the fabric of time. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Thurs., May 2, 2:30, 5:30 & 8 p.m. Sun., 5:30 p.m. $7-$10.*

Community Voices Documentary Film Screening. Chapman University film students produced these short documentaries that highlight the causes of local organizations. A panel discussion with the filmmakers follows. *Chapman University; chapman.edu/dodge/ Thurs., May 2, 7 p.m. Free*

El Chicano. East LA twin brothers (Raul Castillo in a dual role) choose to live their lives differently and wind up on opposite sides of the law. *Starlight Cinema City, (714) 970-6700; Starlight Triangle Cinemas, (714) 650-4300; starlightcinemas.com. Thurs., May 2, 7 & 9:40 p.m. Call for ticket prices.*

Newport Beach Film Festival. The 20th-anniversary cinextravaganza's eight-day run ends with the world premiere of *Part of Water*, Jack Murgatroyd and Tim Burnham's documentary on Newport Beach lifeguard Ben Carlson, who lost his life in a rescue during a massive swell in 2014. The film is followed by the festival's closing-night blowout in the surrounding Lido Village. *Regency Lido Theater; newportbeachfilmfest.com. Thurs., May 2, 8 p.m. Film and closing-night party $95.*

I Trapped the Devil. A couple (AJ Bowen and Susan Burke) arrive uninvited on Christmas at the home of his brother (Scott Poythress), where they discover someone trapped in the basement who may be . . . SATAN! *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Thurs., May 2, 10 p.m. $7-$10.*

The White Crow. Acclaimed dancer Oleg Ivenko stars as Rudolf Nureyev, and Ralph Fiennes plays Russian ballet coach Alexander Polunin. *Directors Cut Cinema at Regency Rancho Niguel, (949) 831-0446. Regency South Coast Village, (714) 557-5701. Opens Fri., call theaters for show times and ticket prices.*

2019 International Film Festival. In *La Famille Bélier*, a teen girl's (Louens Emera) close bond to her hearing-impaired family is challenged by the discovery of an extraordinary talent for music. Presented in French with English subtitles. *Santiago Canyon College, sccollege.edu/internationalfilmfestival. Fri., 6 p.m. Free*

Senior Thesis Cycle 7 Film Screenings. These student-made films premiere, but not necessarily in this order: *As Advised; Difficult Moves; James; Living in Anger; Nara*; and *Side Effects*. Titles are subject to change, and the films are also live streamed. *Chapman University; chapman.edu/dodge/ Fri., 7 p.m. Free*

Bathtubs Over Broadway. Gathering material for *Late Show With David Letterman*, writer Steve Young stumbled upon vintage recordings of bizarre, full-throated Broadway-style musicals for the likes of Ford, DuPont, Xerox, McDonald's and General Electric. *Art Theatre, arttheatrelongbeach.org. Sat. Sun., 11 a.m. $9-$12.*

Boyz N the Hood. The Frida presents a special screening in honor of director John Singleton, who died April 29. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Fri., 7:30 p.m. $7-$10.50.*

May the 4th Movie: *Solo: A Star Wars Story*. Ron Howard's 2018 origin story on Han Solo (Alden Ehrenreich) screens for those in 7th through 12th grades. Enjoy free snacks and make a nebula in a jar. *Library of the Canyons, (714) 949-2216. Sat. noon. Free*

Batman. Billionaire Bruce Wayne (Michael Keaton) battles his inner demons and, as the Dark Knight, the Joker (Jack Nicholson), who unknowingly spawned the inner demons. *Various theaters; www.fathomevents.com. Sat., 1 & 4 p.m. $10.50-$12.50.*

Canelo vs. Jacobs. Beamed into theaters is the live Middleweight World Championship fight between two belt holders: Canelo Alvarez (50-1-2, 34 knockouts) and Daniel "Miracle Man" Jacobs (35-2, 29 KOs). *Various theaters, www.fathomevents.com. Sat., 6 p.m. $20.*

***Star Wars* Family Night.** Themed crafts activities, snacks, entertainment and a film from the canon screens as part of this family-friendly event. *Lake Forest Sports Park; ca-lakeforest.civicplus.com. Sat., 6 p.m. Free.*

Senior Thesis Cycle 6 & VFX Film Screenings. Student filmmakers premiere their works, but not necessarily in this order: *Commander Kane! From Outer Space!; Egon and the Cycles of Abuse; Off With Your Head*; and *Sam*. These are also live streamed. *Chapman University; chapman.edu/dodge/ Sat., 7 p.m. Free*

COURTESY WARNER BROS.

Starship Frida: 12-Hour Intergalactic Sci-Fi Marathon! A surprise lineup of science fiction movies starts at 8 at night and ends at 8 the next morning. Surprises, giveaways and intergalactic fun are promised. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Sat., 8 p.m. $20.*

The Rocky Horror Picture Show. Live shadow cast troupe Midnight Insanity performs. *Art Theatre, arttheatrelongbeach.org. Sat., 11:55 p.m. $9-$12.*

True Grit. Drunken, hard-nosed U.S. marshal Reuben J. "Rooster" Cogburn (John Wayne) and a Texas Ranger (Glen Campbell) help a stubborn teenager (Kim Darby) track down her father's murderer in Indian territory. *Various theaters, www.fathomevents.com. Sun., 1 & 4 p.m., Wed., noon & 7 p.m. $12.50.*

Code Geass: Re;Surrection. Gorō Taniguchi's new anime is set several years after Lelouch's "Zero Requiem" plan. *Starlight Cinema City (714) 970-6700, Starlight Triangle Cinemas, (714) 650-4300; starlightcinemas.com. Sun., 4 p.m. (in Japanese with English subtitles); Tues.-Wed., 7:30 p.m. (dubbed in English). Call for ticket prices.*

Monty Python and the Holy Grail. Follow Arthur, King of the Britons; Sir Lancelot the Brave; and Sir Robin the Not-So-Brave-as-Sir Lancelot as they follow God's directive to find the Holy Grail in the 1975 cult classic. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Mon.-Tues., 2:30, 4:30, 6:30 & 8:30 p.m. $7-$10.*

Batman Returns. The Caped Crusader (Michael Keaton) tries to foil a plot by a corrupt businessman (Christopher Walken) and the Penguin (Danny DeVito) while being distracted by Catwoman (Michelle Pfeiffer). *Various theaters, www.fathomevents.com Mon., 4 & 7 p.m. $10.50-$12.50.*

Graduate Thesis Documentary Screenings. Student-made films premiere and are also live streamed. *Chapman University; chapman.edu/dodge/ Mon., 7 p.m. Free*

Chondra Pierce. Unashamed. The Christian comedian searches the world for people who took stands for Jesus, no matter what it cost them. *Various theaters; www.fathomevents.com. Tues. & Thurs., May 9, 7 p.m. $14.*

Goodfellas. The true story of Henry Hill (Ray Liotta), a half-Irish, half-Sicilian Brooklyn kid who is adopted by neighborhood gangsters at an early age and climbs the ranks of a Mafia family—only to have the violence, body count and drug addiction give him second thoughts about his career. *Directors Cut Cinema at Regency Rancho Niguel, (949) 831-0446. Tues., 7:30 p.m. $8.*

***Tolkien*: Live From the Montclair Film Festival With Stephen Colbert.** It's a special advance screening of Dome Karukoski's bio-drama about the formative years of orphaned author J.R.R. Tolkien (Nicholas Hoult). The actor joins Karukoski and co-star Lily Collins in a live, simulcast audience Q&A moderated by total Tolkien nerd Stephen Colbert. *Various theaters; www.fathomevents.com. Tues., 7:30 p.m. $10.50-$12.50; movie only at Regency South Coast Village, (714) 557-5701. Opens Thurs., May 9, 7:15 p.m. $9-$12.*

Breakfast at Tiffany's. Audrey Hepburn plays the New York party girl who finds love in Blake Edwards' flick that influenced movies, fashion and society. *Regency South Coast Village, (714) 557-5701. Wed., 7:30 p.m. $8.*

The Merchant of Venice. It's the story of an abused Jewish moneylender who exacts a gruesome payment from a merchant who defaults on a large loan. *Oasis Senior Center; humanities.uci.edu. Thurs., May 9, noon. Free*

CdC19 Improvised Film Presentation. While space is limited and reservations are recommended, no seat is guaranteed because programs are overbooked to ensure a full house. *UC Irvine; coup2019.sched.com. Thurs., May 9, 4 p.m. Free*

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West Coast Gem & Mineral Show

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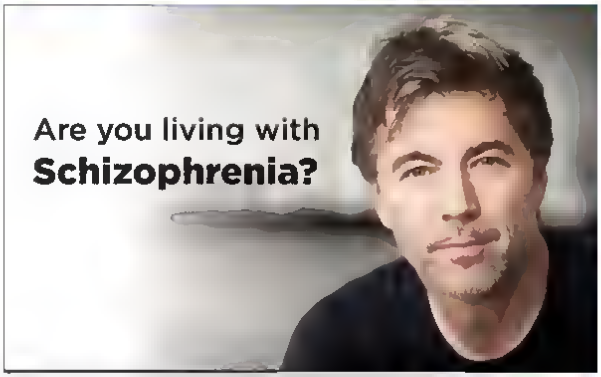

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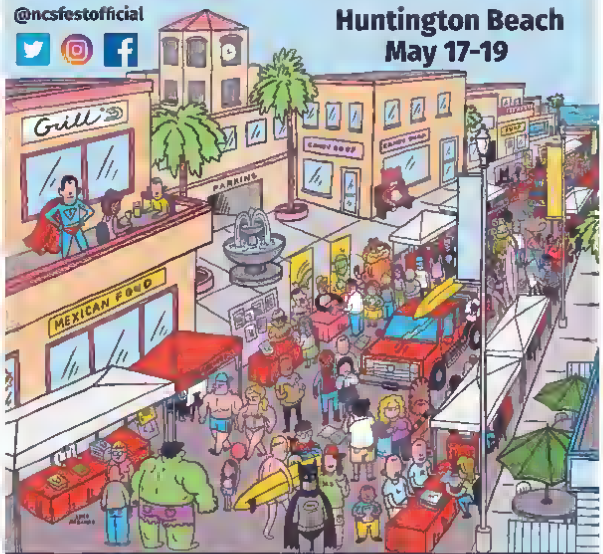

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The Kids Are All Right

A pair of high-school exhibitions show the promise of public arts funding

BY DAVE BARTON

If there is any question whether increased funding on art programs in schools has met with success, one just has to take a trip to Irvine Fine Arts Center's (IFAC) "High School Art Exhibition" and Golden West Gallery's "GWC Student Art Show" to see that your tax money is being well-spent.

In IFAC's juried show, artist Chantal deFelice has chosen an impressive scope of solid work, with nary a medium left untouched. There are paintings, drawings, graphic art, sculptures, photographs and pottery all on view. I was regularly amazed at both the diversity of vision and the high quality, with the best work focusing on the personal, the political, minimalism and the surreal.

Many of the pieces are portraits. Daniel Fernandez's photo *My Room* features a young man lying in bed amid a hamster's nest of sheets and blankets. Surrounded by knickknacks, clothing logos, art and an I HEART New York coffee cup, the white-blue of a cellphone illuminates his face in the darkness. A small boy looks as if he's trapped metaphorically by two walls in Francesca Juarez's *3 Shades of Blue*, a triptych of blue photographs with a sharp emphasis on lines, shade and shadows. *Joshua at Night* is a photorealistic graphite drawing by Joshua Meyer of himself watching something out of frame. It's a marvelous, detailed image, shaded perfectly, revealing a knowledge of scale, especially in the foreshortened fingers reaching for a stack of Oreos.

Among the political works, Parmis Abdoli's untitled graphite drawing is a powerful in-your-face ecological statement: A turtle made from garbage gasps for air through a plastic straw as it swims through a polluted ocean, while Beatriz Dragoljovic's *The Power of Art* is a colorful word graphic built around an Olafur Eliasson quote about art and empathy.

Kobayashi Taiga's skilled, blood-red graphic *Akashi* is a screenprint with only a white haircut and a jacket with the word *Sup* providing personality. Jillian Yee's minimalist trio about Palm Springs strips her imagery to palm trees, a giraffe and a mountain goat at the Living Desert Zoo, bookended by freeways snaking through pink mountains and two straight lanes passing a bluff.

The surreal stakes its territory in the inventive *Sharing Time* by Thomas Cho, a mixed-media drawing of clocks and circles and disembodied arms checking a wristwatch, as explosions of string art nailed to the canvas twist around it in elegant detail. Disembodied heads float in a blue-green plasma throughout Karen Fan's acrylic *The Sea of Emotion*, their rosy cheeks elongating and splitting in mitosis. Avery Klaute and Ashley Trieu's ceramic *USB Becomes Bed* is a brilliant little concept, the Standard-A USB plug shape-shifting into a set of pillows as the data-storage device becomes a tiny mattress and sheets.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: WORKS BY EVELYN FIGUEROA, TIFFANY GUEVERA, JEAN OH, ELYSE LYON. COURTESY GOLDEN WEST COLLEGE

The collection at Golden West College, curated by gallery director Evan Senn, works with a smaller talent pool, with much of the work feeling more like standard class assignments than something with a particular vision or passion behind it, but there are standouts that break through that haze, especially in the graphic arts. The red, white and black umbrellas in a downpour resemble tiny flowers with legs in *School Walk In the Rain* by Diana Mai-Khanh Nguyen; Andrew Tran's superb black-and-white *Birds Over Hills* and Nancy Parch's *Enigma*—a red silhouette filled with flowers, set against a series of black criss-crossing geometrics—are equally impressive.

Likewise, Jean Hernandez's *Self-Portrait* in a bulky hoodie, surrounded by floating fish, is surreally magical. Spooky and beautiful and perfectly painted, *The Lonely* by Tiffany Guevara shows a maturity of skill and an embrace of the unusual, as a young woman with a lantern encounters spirits passing through her while undead hands reach up from the ground. Jean Oh's *The Old Village* is a large wall-hanging ceramic of crowded, aged buildings stacked next to and on top of one another amid the occasional tree, our eyes drawn to the white church near the top. The sponge-like curves and grooves of *Freeform Vase* by Tabitha Schnose resembles something you'd find in an ocean environment. The creepy/fun *Nightlight of Death* by Evelyn Figueroa is a box filled with decapitated Barbie heads, torsos, legs and arms, the perfect representative for every student show's requisite emo doll-parts art piece. *Vase of Acidity*, also by Figueroa, a black-and-white photo of fruit in a glass vase, is about as perfectly modulated as you can get.

All of this serves as a reminder, of course, of how important it is for all of us to ensure that arts programs continue, so the way will be paved for these young artists to succeed. The future will be bright, but only if we fund it.

"HIGH SCHOOL ART EXHIBITION"
at Irvine Fine Arts Center, Heritage Community Park, 14321 Yale Ave., Irvine, (949) 724-6880, www.cityofirvine.org/irvine-fine-arts-center/current-exhibitions Open Mon.-Thurs., 10 a.m.-9 p.m., Fri., 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sat., 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Through May 4. Free

"GWC STUDENT ART SHOW"
at Golden West Gallery, Fine Arts Building, 15751 Gothard St., Huntington Beach, (714) 895-8316, gwcgallery.com Open Tues.-Sat., 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Through May 17. Free

ARTSOVERLOAD

» AIMEE MURILLO

May 3-9

***PRIDE IS LOVE* CABARET AND SILENT AUCTION:** Songs from the '70s through the '90s will be sung by SoCal's best vocalists to promote the upcoming OC LGBT Pride event. Fri., 7 p.m. $20-$30. Decades Bar & Grill, 195 W. Center St., Anaheim, (714) 304-1606, www.pridesc.com.

***THE SECRET GARDEN*:** Broadcast live from Broadway 3-D Theatricals presents the classic story of a young girl discovering a hidden garden within her uncle's mansion. Fri., 8 p.m. Sat., 2 & 8 p.m., Sun., 2 p.m., Thurs., 7:30 p.m. Through May 19. $40-$85. Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts, 18000 Park Plaza Dr., Cerritos, (562) 916-8500, 3dtheatricals.org.

***LOVE 'EM AND LEASH 'EM* DOG DAY:** A full day of nature activities to participate in with your pups, including hikes, a dog cake walk and a dog-kissing contest, plus a groomer, vaccine booth, vendors and more. Sat., 8 a.m. Free. Carbon Canyon Regional Park, 4442 Carbon Canyon, Brea, (714) 973-3160, letsgooutside/loveandleash.

OC ZOO'S BEAR AWARENESS DAY: Learn about the animal and conservation through crafting activities, zookeeper chats and a learning station. Sat., 10 a.m. Free with zoo admission ($2; children 2 and younger free). OC Zoo, 1 Irvine Park Rd., Orange, (714) 973-6847, www.ocparks.com/zoo.

60TH ANNUAL GEM, MINERAL AND JEWELRY SHOW: Vendors will sell various exotic gemstones, fossils, minerals, stones and more. Sat.-Sun., 10 a.m. Free. Brookhurst Community Center and Park, 2271 Crescent Ave., Anaheim, (714) 765-3373, www.searchersrocks.org/show.

18TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL: A diverse set of cultures will be represented through food vendors, musical performances and dancers. Sat., 10:30 a.m. Free. Soka University, 1 University Dr., Aliso Viejo, www.soka.edu/festival.

LONG BEACH SEAFOOD FESTIVAL: A delicious tour of Los Angeles and Orange County's seafood-restaurant scene, featuring notable chefs creating delicious plates to sample. Sat., 11 a.m. $8-$78. Shoreline Aquatic Park, 200 Aquarium Way, Long Beach, (562) 983-5818, www.facebook.com/socalfate.

23RD ANNUAL RANCHO DAYS FIESTA: A celebration of Orange County's rancho history with Native American and folklorico dancing, butter churning, rancho-era music, charro horse riding, and more. Sat., 11 a.m. $5. Heritage Hill Historical Park, 25151 Serrano Rd., Lake Forest, (949) 923-2230, ocparks.com/hshsnoc/heritage.

TASTE OF ORANGE: Local restaurants and breweries offer samples of their prized dishes. Proceeds go toward helping children and families through the nonprofit Orange Blossoms. Sun., 5 p.m. $15-$25. Assistance League of Orange, 124 S. Orange St., Orange, (714) 532-5800, www.assistanceleague.org/orange.

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DonJulio

Bollywood Blues

Aki Kumar makes cultures combust in Santa Ana

BY JIM WASHBURN

Want some idea of what you'll see onstage at Original Mike's on Friday when Aki Kumar performs?

"I won't have June core, but I am most likely going to have body dots and playing drugs," said Kumar in a recent phone conversation. That's according to the automated transcription program I use, which does tend to lively up an interviewee's prose.

Poor Mr. Kumar was only trying to tell me that June Core, the superlative drummer who accompanied him in SoCal earlier this year, will be replaced this time by "Marty Dodson playing drums." He's likely superlative, too, but I think you'll agree this news isn't nearly as compelling as a promise of drugs and body dots, is it?

Unless Kumar gets measles, don't expect dots, but here's what you should expect: A guy from Mumbai who sings and plays blues harp with enough feeling and personality to have earned the praise of Charlie Musselwhite, Junior Watson and other blues touchstones. Kumar takes classic Bollywood soundtrack tunes and filters them through the Southside of Chicago or a Delta roadhouse, and he makes you like it—a lot.

Those of you who know me know that Old Jim would send most blues players to a hell where KISS tribute bands overrun their blues jams for all eternity. The majority of blues for the past four decades or more has been overwrought, overamped, muscle-bound wank, a paucity of soul that Johnny Otis once described as sounding like guys scratching when they don't itch and laughing when it ain't funny.

Also, aside from playing louder and worse, contemporary blues players act as if the generations-old blues forms are now the religious scripture from which they shall not stray. But the players they emulate were in constant flux. Guys who started off strumming a mail-order acoustic guitar on a tree stump in a Mississippi turpentine camp ended up playing distorted electric guitars when they hit Memphis or Chicago in the 1950s, then they added bass and drums to invent the instrumentation that became the standard for rock bands. Some added a swing jazz influence or a Mardi Gras cadence. And if B.B. King or Little Walter heard a Latin rhythm he liked on the radio, it was going into his next record.

Given long enough, maybe Walter would have gotten around to doing Bollywood blues. Instead, we get Kumar, who got a running start on it from half a world away. Born in 1980, he grew up in Mumbai, immersed in Bollywood's hits—"whether I wanted to be or not," he says—and for whom American blues was a revelation when he first heard it after coming to the U.S. for a tech career.

If Western audiences have the impression Bollywood music is a bunch of campy pop, "that's because it is campy pop, most of it," Kumar says. "I can't even listen to the contemporary stuff. But if you dig carefully through its history, you'll find songs that are great because of the melodies, arrangements and poetry in them."

Along with those ubiquitous soundtrack tunes, Kumar heard classical music from his dad's small record collection; Stevie Wonder, the Police and other Western pop on the radio; and traditional Indian music in school, where students were introduced to the arts at arm's length.

"India is not the kind of culture that encourages the arts as a career choice. The focus in education is toward just getting a job and staying alive," Kumar says. "There was no guarantee of anything in life. Just because today was a good day, that didn't mean you could count on tomorrow. Even the roads and sidewalks were so rotten that just getting from point A to point B was a different adventure every time."

The good side of living in a chaotic metropolis was that it was a tremendous melting pot that exposed him to cultures from around the globe. It did not, however, prepare him for Oklahoma City, where he moved to in 1997 to further his education in software engineering. "Talk about culture shock!" Kumar recalls. "In Mumbai, you couldn't walk 1 foot without bumping into 10 people, and then in Oklahoma City, you'd look both ways down the street and see not one human being. It was almost post-apocalyptic."

"And my perception had been that the U.S. was a thriving, liberal, enlightened society. There are pockets of that in Oklahoma, but it is a deeply red state. Even the guy who ran the school's math department had Rush Limbaugh on all the time."

Kumar found the U.S. better met his expectations once he'd transferred to San Jose State University. One thing that continued to disappoint him was our contemporary popular music, which led him to start digging through older music. He fell in love with the blues, took harmonica lessons, attended blues jams, started gigging professionally, and in 2014 said goodbye to the tech world to be a full-time bluesman.

Championed by Bay Area guitar whiz Kid Andersen, Kumar built a strong local reputation playing traditional blues, while not buying into the immutability of that tradition. "Some people treat the blues like it's some fundamental and unyielding law of physics that shall not change. And that's never how it was with the musicians who created it. It was new music then, and they were absorbing influences all the time," he maintains.

DELTA BLUES BY WAY OF MUMBAI

COURTESY OF AKI KUMAR

One day, he was listening to a Bollywood tune and thought its changes would make an interesting blues song. Now Kumar has filled two albums with the stuff (alongside originals, some straight-ahead blues, a foray into ska/soul/jazz with "Watermelon Man" and other twists): *Aki Goes to Bollywood* and his current *Hindi Man Blues*.

The latter is all over the map. The opening "Dum Maaro Dum" sounds like a happy riot erupting amidst a spy movie. "Ajeeb Daastaan Hai Yeh" filters Jimmy Reed through the silt of the Ganges. "Vob Surmayi Shaam" opens with Kumar's mom singing. Yay, Mom!

"Sajan Re Jhoot Mat Bolo" has an eerie, trancelike mood, with a slowed-down Bo Diddley lick and a vocal that sounds like a windblown prayer from a distant minaret's PA horn. "I really loved this song when I was growing up," Kumar says. "It's very deep, kind of like [Memphis Slim's] 'Mother Earth,' basically asking, 'What's the point of having material possessions when we're all going to disappear into the dirt?'"

"Dilruba" is a Texas-style swing blues he wrote with Andersen. As with the Bollywood covers, Kumar sings it in Hindi because, he says, the language suits the song's Louis Prima-styled vocal. There are other advantages. "One thing I like about singing my own songs is you're not going to know when I screw them up," he says. "So I've got that working for me, and then I'm singing them in Hindi! So basically, you've got no shot at catching me."

His albums have earned glowing reviews. He's played Hardly Strictly Bluegrass and other festivals, is likely touring Sweden and Russia this summer, and books four or five local gigs per week around San Jose with his band, which features the prodigious Rome Yamilov on guitar, bass player Vance Ehlers and whichever drummer isn't exploding that week.

That's all noble work, but Kumar really deserves to be twice as big as a Beatle or two, what with all the percolating spirit, verve, soul, humor and general delightfulness he puts in his music.

AKI KUMAR AND THE SILVER KINGS perform at Original Mike's, 101 S. Main, Santa Ana, (714) 550-7764, www.originalmikes.com. Fri., 7:30 p.m. $10-$30. All ages.

JOHN GILHOOLEY

Bound for Gory

Details of touring that nobody tells you

CLOCKED IN
» BRAD LOGAN

I started packing at 11 p.m. last night for a tour that goes from Seattle to Florida, via California and Texas. These days, I can pretty much fit the entire contents of my tour ensemble into a full-size backpack, man-purse and soft guitar bag. Checking luggage costs money and can add up quick. It was to be avoided at all costs.

Highlights of my Uber ride to the airport included: the driver asking me with a straight face if I was 70 years old because he really wanted to know (for the record, I'm 20 years younger than that), stopping for gas on the way, even though I was running late; the driver asking me if I would care to read his Bible while I waited for said gas to be pumped. As I was sitting in the back seat and thinking of posting a "Bible Alert" review of my driver, it occurred to me that Uber should include the option of requesting a non-speaking driver. I would pay extra for the luxury.

Once I arrived at the airport, I got my boarding passes and was informed I would be flying into a blizzard—stay posted for possible delays. Cool. Seattle hadn't seen snow in years, so this was gonna be fun. A couple of bumpy-ass flights later, and I was in Jet City. Growing up in the endless sun of SoCal, I came to appreciate cold weather. Rain, snow and ice are a vacation paradise to me. My band mates weren't as lucky; their flights were delayed until the following day. We didn't have a show tonight, but rehearsal had to be canceled. We could go over songs at sound check tomorrow.

Mid-afternoon on show day, and the other bands start arriving, some still drunk from the previous night. Hugs all around, then we load our gear in like a dutiful parade of ants, through the grime and slush of the Capitol Hill gutters.

I'm in love with the camaraderie shared among touring bands. Like survivors of a natural disaster, bonds are forged that transcend time, distance and space. Only another band/road crew person can understand the simultaneous joy and total fucking insanity a simple automobile ride can foster. I have seen grown adults lose their shit and fistfight, over a 20-hour drive spent curled up in the fetal position on a van bench, with six other people breathing at you. The van has, for all intents and purposes, become your whole world. But touring is 10 percent stage time and 90 percent work getting to and from that stage.

The first week—in particular, the first show—is always the toughest. It's about throwing your mind and body into a vortex that is the polar opposite of home. The way a body moves onstage while playing high-energy music is not the way a body would move in regular life, except for maybe running from the cops or jumping fences while being shot at.

During the course of a gig, you're using all kinds of muscles you didn't know you had and don't even feel till the next morning, when you wake up fucked. This doesn't necessarily hold true for musical choreography, dance or people who work out six days a week, but that's not what we're talking about here. There are also bruises and wounds of unknown origin discovered at the end of the night, when your adrenaline finally stops blasting through your veins. It's death by a thousand cuts, and you writhe and twist as your muse dictates because you are fucking possessed by a power that is centuries old.

It's a power greater than the greatest minds of our pitiful species: the power of rock—or whatever you choose to play. It's all the same. We're slaves to the beat. Music is the master, and we offer our weak minds and flesh as humble sacrifice.

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Friday

THE AQUAOOLS; YOUR FAVORITE COLOR, NEW FOSSILS, MAL LONDON + BUTTER. 8:30 p.m. $5–$7. all ages. Garden Amp (The Locker Room), 12762 Main St., Garden Grove. (949) 415-8544, gardeeamp.com

HOR & CHAIN REACTION PRESENT THE CHAOS ANO CARNAGE TOUR, WITH DYING FETUS, FALLUJAH, SPITE, UNCUREO. RURIEO AROVE GROUND: 5 p.m. $19–$25. all ages. Haese of Blues at Anaheim GardeeWalk, 400 W. Orsney Way, Anaheim. (714) 778-2583. www.houseofblues.com/anaheim

LAS CAFETERAS: 9 p.m., $20. 21+. La Santa, 220 E. Third St., Saeta Ana. (657) 231-6005. www.lasantaec.com

THE MIONIGHT. 8 p.m. $20, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600. www.observatoryac.com

SEGA GENECIOE. 9 p.m., $8. 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa. (949) 764-0039; www.wayfarercm.com

THE WEIRDOS, THE STITCHES, SHATTERED FAITH, JAIL WEODINGR, LOOSE TRUCKS. 8 p.m., $20. 21+. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach. (562) 434-8292; www.alexsbar.com.

Saturday

THE RLASTERS. 8 p.m., $20. 21+. La Saeta, 220 E. Third St., Saeta Aea. (657) 231-6005. www.lasantaoc.com.

CITY OFTHE SUN; JOHN ERROL. 9 p.m. $15, all ages. The Coastellatne Room, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Saeta Ana. (714) 957-0600. www.observatoryac.com.

DON AMOR, LAUNOER; PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY; VANILLAROMA. 7 p.m. $10. 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, (949) 764-0039. www.wayfarercm.com

PRE-CINCO OE MAYO WITH COMO LA FLOR BANO TRIRUTE TO SELENA. 5 p.m., $10. all ages. Gardee Amp (The Locker Room), 12762 Main St., Gardee Grove. (949) 415-8544. gardeeamp.com.

TERROR JR; KOSSISKO. 8 p.m., $19.50, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Herbar Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600. www.observatoryac.com

THREE MILE PILOT, SYSTEMS OFFICER, PALL JENKINS. 8 p.m., $15, 21+. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, (562) 434-8292, www.alexsbar.com.

Sunday

BENEFIT FOR BETO, WITH TRANSISTOR LB, 1R AGAIN!, BARBIE & THE HOOKERS; THE COBRAS. None. $5. 21+. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach. (562) 434-8292; www.alexsbar.com.

THE VOIOZ; TRUE RLUE. 8 p.m., $39.50. all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Herbar Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600; www.observatoryac.com

THE WELL; LORDS OF DUST, VOIO VATOR. 8 p.m. $10. 21+. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach. (562) 434-8292. www.alexsbar.com.

YNGWIE MALMSTEEN. 7 p.m. $25. all ages. House of Blues at Anaheim GardeeWalk, 400 W. Orsney Way, Anaheim. (714) 778-2583. www.houseofblues.com/anaheim

Monday

ALRIGHT SPIDER, THE ROOSTER, THE CHILDREN. 7:30 p.m., free. 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa. (949) 764-0039; www.wayfarercm.com.

STRFKR. 8 p.m., $30. 21+. La Santa, 220 E. Third St., Saeta Ana. (657) 231-6005. www.lasantaac.com

Tuesday

THE PALMS; JOSHUA SPEERS. 8 p.m., $12, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Herbar Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600. www.observatoryac.com.

Wednesday

THE CUREO—TRIRUTE TO THE CURE. 7 p.m., $15, all ages. House of Blees at Anaheim GardeeWalk, 400 W. Orsney Way, Anaheim. (714) 778-2583; www.houseofblees.com/aeaheim

SHIRO; BEARWULF, THEMORS, CHASE PETRA. 8 p.m., free. 21+. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach. (562) 434-8292. www.alexsbar.com.

Thursday, May 9

ACIO MOTHERS TEMPLE. 8 p.m., $10–$12. 21+. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach. (562) 434-8292, www.alexsbar.com.

CHAOS CHAOS; WORN-TIN. 9 p.m. $13, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd. Saeta Ana, (714) 957-0600. www.observatoryac.com.

EELS, ROBERT ELLIS—TEXAS PIANO MAN. 8 p.m., $35, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd. Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600; www.observatoryac.com

FLAURAL, BLANCO NINO; COSMO GOLD. 8 p.m. $8. 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa. (949) 764-0039; www.wayfarercm.com.

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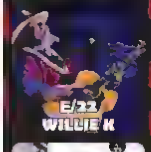
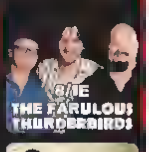


5/3	VENICE
5/4	BERLIN
5/6	ARETHA: QUEEH RF SRUL FT: CHARITY LOCKNART
5/9	ROGER CLYNE & TNE PEACEMAKERS
5/10	RAUL MALO
5/11	*SONGS & STORIES: AN EVENING WITH* ART ALEXAKIS of EVERCLEAR, CHRIS COLLINGWOOD OF FOUNTAINS OF WAYNE, MAX COLLINS OF EVE 6, JOHN WOZNIAK OF MARCY PLAYGROUND
5/12	PROJSCT PRESLEY *(ELVIS PRESLEY TRIBUTE)*
5/16	FOREVER ROO *(ROD STEWART TRIBUTE)*
5/17	AN EVENING WITH COWSOY JUNKIES
5/18	THE ETH DIMENEION
5/19	FUNNIEST NOUSEWIVES
5/22	WILLIE H
5/23	PUDDLEE PITY PARTY
5/24	OINGO SOINGO FORMER MEMBERS
5/25	EEHEFIT FOR CICK DALE
5/26	SLINO MELON
5/30	LITTLE RIVER BAND
5/31	YOUNG OUSLINERS
6/1	OESPERADO *(EAGLES TRIBUTE)*
6/2	SERPENTINE FIRE *(EARTH, WIND AND FIRE TRIBUTE)*
6/7	ASIA FT. JOHH PAYNE
6/8	BRETT DENNEN
6/11	JOHN PAUL WHITE
6/14	GARY NOEY
6/15	DEB *(JOURNEY TRIBUTE)*
6/16	BEE GEES GOLD
6/20	CRYSTAL SOWERSOX
6/21	CASN'D OUT
6/22	Y&T
6/23	AN EVENING WITH JOHN HIATT
6/29	TNE CHAIRMAN &RD THE BOARD *(RAT PACK TRIBUTE)*
T/3	TNE WAILERS
T/5	MICHY DOLEHZ
T/5	BEATLES vs STONES
T/12	TNE PETTY BREAKERS
7/13	LOS LOHELY BOYS



UPCOMING SHOWS

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7/1E	HENRY KAPOHO	9/E	GLENN MILLER ORCHEETRA
7/20	HIRDER		
7/23	TEO HUGEH7	9/12	AORIAH RELEW
7/24	TEO HUGEH7	9/2D	HERMaH'E HERMITS
7/27	SKELETOH CREW *(GRATEFUL DEAD TRIBUTE)*	8/21	HERMAH'B HERMITS
		9/22	GARY PUCKETT
7/2B	STRUNZ AND FARAH	9/27	QUEEH RATIOH
8/3	HOHK	9/28	QUEER RATIOH
8/7	7HE BACOH EROTHERS	10/E	DOH MCLEAH
9/9	EURLIMEO	10/11	OOKKEN
9/1E	THE FABULOUE THUHOERBIROS	10/13	JUOY COLLIHS
		10/24	TAB BEHOIT
8/21	JUSTIN HAYWARD	11/8	EUPER DIAMOHD *(NEIL DIAMOND TRIBUTE)*
8/29	BAVOT BROWH		
8/30	CINDERELLA'S TOM KEIFER	11/1D	DAVID WILCOX
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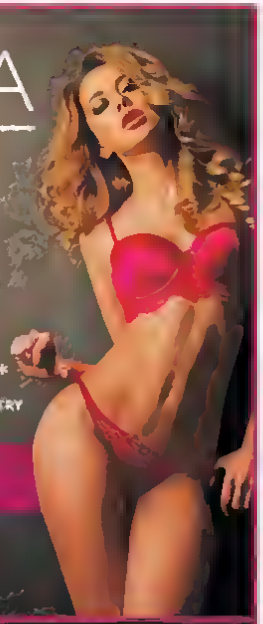

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Quickies

I've been with my boyfriend for a few months. Prior to dating, I was clear with him that I would need to open our relationship at some point. He initially hesitated to respond, but then agreed we could do that when the time came. That time has come much quicker than I anticipated, but I feel like he'll renege on his end of things because of many comments he's made recently—comments like not understanding or liking nonmonogamy and how "his woman" sleeping around is a deal breaker. Is this a DTMFA situation?
Specified Open Relationship Early

Early on, you let your boyfriend know that openness "at some point" was your price of admission—the price he'd have to pay to be with you—and now he's letting you know that monogamy is his price of admission. What's going on here? Well, sometimes Person A tells Person B what Person A knows Person B wants to hear regarding Topic X in the hopes that Person B will feel differently about Topic X after the passage of time or after Person B has made a large emotional investment in Person A. In many cases, Person A has the best intentions—by which I mean Person A isn't being consciously manipulative, but rather Person A sincerely hopes Person B will come to feel differently about Topic X or that they, Person A themselves, will. But considering how little time has passed, SORE—it hasn't even been three months, and he's saying shitty/judgy things to you about nonmonogamy and sexist/controlling things about "his woman"—it seems clear that your boyfriend wasn't being sincere, he was being manipulative. DTMFA.

This is another request for a kinky neologism. How about those of us who like the idea of our significant other having sex with somebody else but who aren't into full-on cuckold-style humiliation? "Cuckold" implies a level of subordination that just isn't my thing, and "hotwifing" (besides sounding incredibly sleazy) assumes that it's a couple that is opposite sex and married, and the guy is only interested in watching. Can you or the hive mind solve this problem?
Cuck In Name Only

I don't think the term "hotwifing" is inherently heterosexist, as there are gay men and straight women out there into "hothusbanding." (They get off on sharing their hot spouses with others, aren't necessarily interested in getting with anyone else themselves, and don't, à la cuckolds, get off on humiliation.) But if that term doesn't appeal to you, CINO, there's already an alternative: stags (a man who may or may not be dominant who likes to share his partner and may or may not participate) and vixens (a woman who may or may not be submissive who enjoys having sex with others in front of her partner and may or may not share them with others, too).

I've experienced anal itching in the past, and I'm not ashamed to say I enjoyed it. It felt so insanely good to satisfy that itching inside. I can find lots of information about relieving anal itching, but I can't find anything about inducing it for pleasure.
Into Tormenting Clean Heroin

According to the Mayo Clinic, keeping your ass too clean or letting it get too dirty can induce anal itching, as can pinworms, diabetes, and anal tumors. Seeing as you probably don't want diabetes or rectal cancer, and since pinworms aren't for sale at your local bait shop, ITCH, you could try scrubbing your ass with harsh soaps, which is what the Mayo Clinic urges people who don't want itchy anuses to avoid. (I reversed engineered their advice for you. You're welcome.) Good luck, and please don't write back to let us know how you're progressing, okay?

I am a 24-year-old pansexual trans woman, and I feel sexually broken. Hormones have made it nearly impossible for me to top a partner. I'm able to do it once in a while, but not as much or as reliably as I would like. Additionally, hormones have messed up my digestive system and made bottoming difficult. I'm also relatively sexually inexperienced, which means I'm enthusiastic about oral but not very good at it. This leaves me feeling like I bring nothing to the table.
Horny But Sex Is Thorny

Getting good at oral—like getting good at anything—takes a little practice. Let your prospective partners know you're relatively inexperienced, and you'll be far likelier to wind up in bed with patient and supportive people who will let you practice on them. As for bottoming, hopefully your guts will settle down in time. As for topping, well, lots of women use strap-on dildos for penetration. Having a strap-on at the ready *and* actively seeking out partners who don't regard strap-on sex as a consolation prize (or a fail) will allow you to experiment with penetration without the pressure of having to produce or sustain an erection. You can switch back and forth between your dick and the dildo as needed, and being able to make it happen for your lover—using whatever tools you need—will build your confidence. And you're not broken, HBSIT. You are, like all of us, a work in progress. Good luck.

I'm a college professor. Several female students have confided in me they're having trouble finding guys. (They're not hitting on me—and even if they were, no way am I dating a student.) These girls are smart, nice, interesting and usually obese. You and I both know that in this imperfect world, many (most?) people place importance on looks. But how do I tell them that? A straight, single, male professor telling a female student, even gently, that dropping 20 pounds might help her dating prospects is extremely risky.
Professionally Risky Observation Flummoxes

Oh, my god. Keep you mouth shut. First, because it's an asshole thing to say—never mind the professional risk—and second, because it's not true. (Welcome to America, PROF, where most people are overweight or obese, and most are partnered or married.) The likeliest culprit here (besides a skewed sample size and confirmation bias) is the scarcity of available male partners. Women now significantly outnumber men on college campuses: "Where men once went to college in proportions far higher than women—58 percent to 42 percent as recently as the 1970s—the ratio has now almost exactly reversed," Jon Marcus wrote in the *Atlantic*. Graduating will probably do more to improve their romantic prospects than dropping 20 pounds.

I recently broke up with a girl because she didn't know what plate tectonics was. We dated for three months. Great sex! Loved cooking together! Enjoyed spending time with her! But she was raised Mormon—and more important than that, she was simply NOT CURIOUS about science and the world. In all honesty, I think she's a little dumb, although she doesn't come off that way. Science! Politics! Philosophy! All of these things are important in my life! Am I wrong for breaking up with her?
Date Tectonics

No! You did her a favor! I knew nothing about classical music before I fell in love with someone who's passionate about classical music. I know a lot about it now, and I actually enjoy it—but I didn't get there in three months. My husband didn't follow the news closely until he fell in love with a news junkie. Now he's a daily reader of *The New York Times* and the *Washington Post*—but he didn't get there in three months. The more time we spent together, the more interest we took in each other's interests. There's a lesson in here for you somewhere, OT, but I'm going to let you tease it out—because you're CURIOUS and SMART, right?

On the Lovecast (savagelovecast.com), Dan interviews sociologist and author Nicholas A. Christakis. Contact Dan via mail@savagelove.net, follow Dan on Twitter @fakedansavage, and visit ITMFA.org.

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Brunch is the worst. For anyone who has ever worked in the service industry, brunch is a shift often approached with dread and anguish. After working a busy Saturday night filled with drunks, shenanigans and horny twentysomethings, most servers and bartenders are ready for some well-deserved rest and relaxation. But before we can hang up our aprons and migrate to our own bar stools, we must first try and help our customers with hangovers, bad attitudes and drink orders that feature every beverage known to man all at once. Fun, right?

Luckily for me, I've been able to avoid brunch as if it were the plague, thanks mostly to staying single and refusing to hang out with anyone who doesn't eat breakfast and lunch separately. Although Orange County seems to love drinking at 10 in the morning on weekends, I've found some like-minded people who prefer their meals to be eaten without first uploading 80 pictures of burnt toast.

Open at 6 a.m. daily, From the Earth in Santa Ana provides the Citrus District with a steady supply of flowers from every corner of our beautiful state. The appropriately named Mimosa phenotype from SD Strains will have you ditching the patio for a pillow and throwing that pale-orange sugar water you've been chugging into the garbage. With 25 percent THC, expect to feel the same effects you'd get from champagne, but without the headaches, nausea and bad decisions that go along with day drinking. Now if only they could deliver us a proper eggs Benedict.

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Available at From the Earth, 3023 S. Orange Ave., Santa Ana, (657) 444-7336; ftesus.com/santa-ana.

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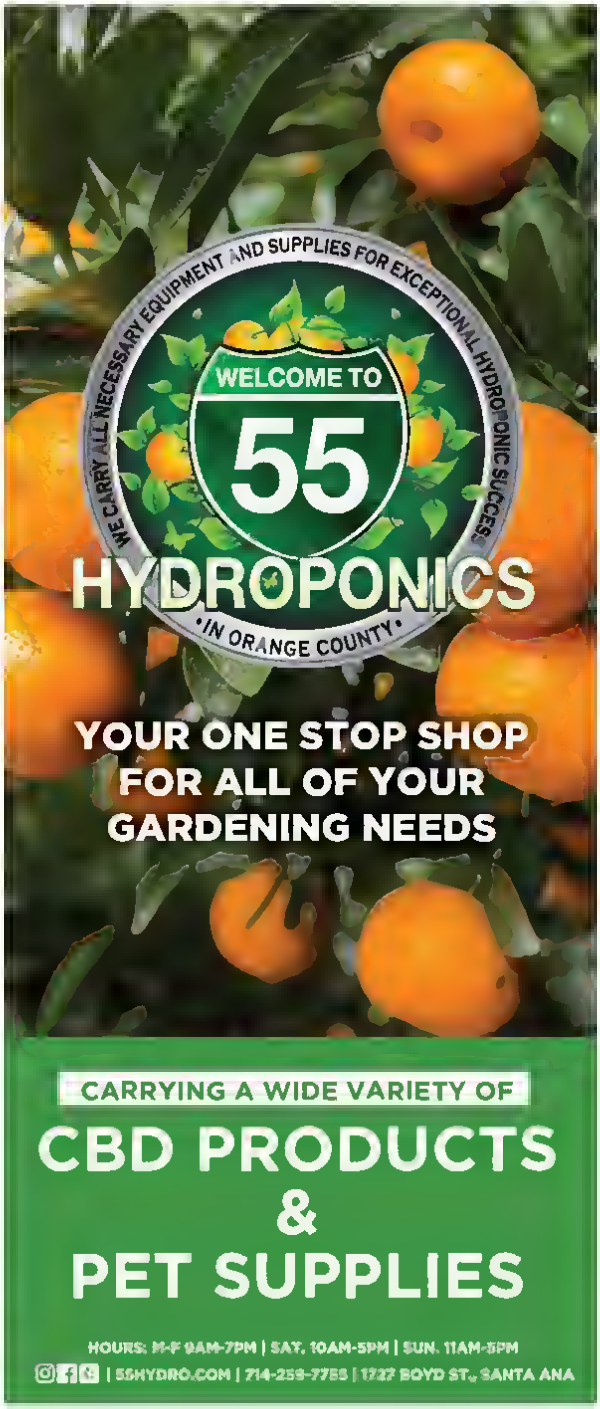
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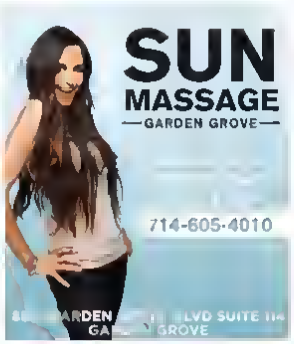
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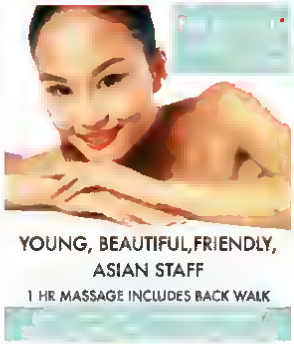
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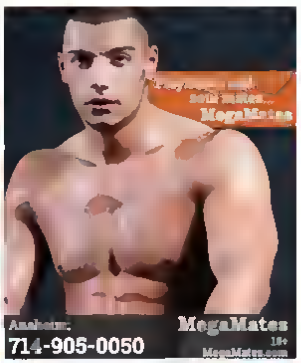
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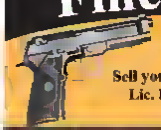
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DIY or Don't

But you really should

BY JIM WASHBURN

I fixed a television set. I'll repeat that: I fixed a television set. These days, that's tantamount to slaying a dragon.

Fifty-six years ago, were you quite so old, you would have been sitting around watching Peter, Paul & Mary sing "Puff the Magic Dragon" on *Ed Sullivan*, and if the family's black-and-white TV suddenly went on the fritz, you know what you'd do? You'd fix it.

A 6-year-old with supervision could do it: Loosen a few screws, pull off the back, remove the vacuum tubes, test them on the space-age diagnostic machine at the Thrifty Drug Store, replace the bad ones for a couple of bucks, and *voila!* If the problem's in the guts, Dad asks Zenith for a schematic, warms up the soldering gun, and *voila!* If the problem's more complex, the repairman comes over, Mom hands him a few bucks, and *voila!*

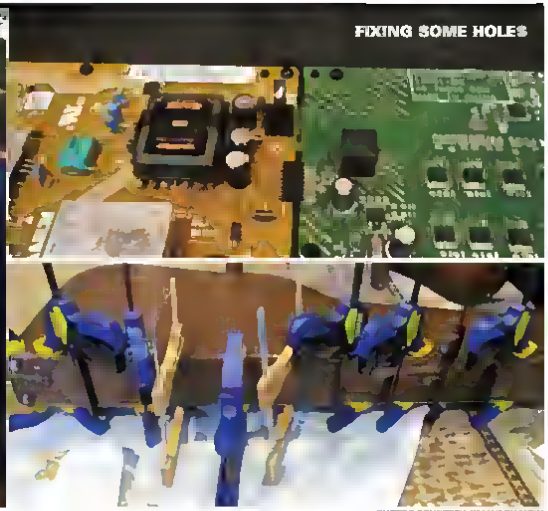
Goodbye, *voila!* Hello, Vizio. It has a gigantic, godlike picture, is one-twelfth as deep, and doesn't get hot enough to heat taquitos on it. That seems like real progress to me. The trade-off is when the screen goes dark after three years, you've suddenly got a slab of e-waste the size of a Pollock painting. It's not made for you to work on, and it's embossed with dire warnings against attempting such. There is less risk, evidently, in giving a mountain lion a bubble bath.

The Vizio was the second big-ass flat-screen to die on me. I kept the first dead one for well more than a year so I could stub my toes on it, certain that someday I'd open it up and magically fix it. It wound up on the lawn with a $5 sign on it.

For reasons I don't understand, my wife didn't want me doing the same with the Vizio. I think having a bunch of broken TVs around is a status thing, like southerners whose yards are full of rusty automobile carcasses. People will see your busted TVs and say, "Wow, look at the life this guy has led! He's seen it all!"

I don't know anyone who has ever had a flat-screen TV repaired. Why dump $187 into getting it fixed when another thing could go wrong in two months? You could put that money into a shiny new set with even more gala shit that can go wrong with it. C'mon, consume!

But I just can't give up that easily. There's an inspirational poster that says, "Whatever the story of my life will be, in no sentence of it will it ever say, 'I gave up.'" That's true of me, especially as regards the sentence "I gave up weed." I have a hash pipe I got in 1976, and if I can still make it work, no damn TV is going to get the better of me.



PHOTOS COURTESY JIM WASHBURN

So after only a month of inaction this time, I got on the internet and entered the plaintive search words *Vizio, screen dark* and *sadness accrues*. Next thing I knew, I was watching YouTube videos of guys in overalls who looked less likely to be working on a TV than to be working on Ned Beatty in *Deliverance*. But what they did was methodically show me how to diagnose and fix my TV.

I learned that on certain models, if your screen goes dead, shine a flashlight on it at close range. If you see a ghostly image of what should be there, the problem might be loose solder joints in the thumbnail-sized connector plug between the video board and power supply.

Following the YouTube instructions, I pulled the suspect circuit board from the set, and under high magnification, I found that the solder joints were indeed loose in each of the 14 tiny solder joints. A mere 20 cents of solder and two hours of intricate, curse-laden soldering later, the set was working fine, and we'd saved $800 by not buying a new TV.

I have to advise you not to try this at home. Take it to a campground, so raccoons can dispose of your body if you electrocute yourself. Your TV *will* try to kill you given half a chance. Even unplugged, its capacitors can store a lethal charge for days and carry a grudge for years against your binge-watching 168 *Rifleman* episodes.

The moral of this tale is that you are not helpless. The ruling class would have you believe that your phone, automobile and even your own body has no user-serviceable parts. (Not true! I've read accounts of people trepanning their own brains, and in Jamaica, I once cut a burrowing insect out of my belly using nothing but nail clippers and a head full of rum. Your body is a wonderland! Or at least a decrepit fun zone.)

I'm older than rope, but I'm still learning to MacGyver new things, including how to fix a refrigerator or bring 1950s Fender Telecaster cases back from the dead. If you hit a wall, there's a world full of people willing to help.

My long-gone friend, the OC manufacturer/philanthropist John Crean, told me that whenever he had a mobile-home design problem he couldn't lick, he'd call a competitor and ask how he'd solved it. Crean said, "Half the time they'd say, 'You have a hell of a nerve asking me that' because we were really going after each other's business, and then they'd tell me the answer. I did the same when they called me. That's just something about human nature."

Brian Wilson once wrote a song called "You Need a Mess of Help to Stand Alone," and truer words were never spoken. The author Victor Villaseñor made a great point that human history is one of cooperation, that we only hear so much about war and empire-building because men write history and men like mischief. The real day-to-day tale is of neighbors, villages and nations helping one another.

Technology alters the shape of that, but not the essence. As locked-down, Trumped-up, profiteered and corporatized as the world may seem, the ol' synapses chart new paths of wonder through it. Maybe Facebook is electrified evil, but it's also how I find out about protests, how I learn if a friend needs help, how I hear about artists in town to share what they've got. It's where I churn out inane photo captions to distract folks from life's sorrows and avulsions. Yay for electrified evil!

You never know where your stuff might reach if you don't keep churning. A year ago, I joined a sane gun laws protest outside then-Representative Mimi Walters' Irvine office. Heading out the door, I thought, "I should have a sign." I was meeting a friend there who was giving me an old turntable, so, great, I'd make a sign saying, "The only revolver you need" and carry 16 ungainly pounds of turntable through the march. My back suggested I instead attach a copy of the Beatles *Revolver* album to a Saran Wrap spool.

Five minutes of work, and then I was out the door and on my way to fleeting immortality. The *Weekly* ran a photo, and it was quickly copied and shared tens of thousands of times around the world. A guy even used it as his ID photo on a Texas dating site. Creepy, yes, but it did my spirit a world of good that some guy thought a photo of me would get him laid.

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